

## SCDOT reorganizes headquarters operations

By Pete Poore

Secretary Robert St. Onge began a series of announcements at the end of October concerning the organization of operations at SCDOT Headquarters. St. Onge said that adjustments in the work flow were needed following his review during his first six months in office. He determined that a lack of coordination and synchronization was creating breakdowns between major functions such as procurement that were not centralized.

Following his assessment, he created a special task force from SCDOT employees who were charged with interviewing key leaders at SCDOT and making recommendations that would refine processes. The task force was also asked to provide a timeline for transitioning into its recommendations. Those recommendations were presented to St. Onge on Nov. 3.

The most important recommendations involved the creation of a Procurement Office to consolidate all procurement activities in one centralized operation, the development of a Division of Support Services which will include a Customer Relations Office, and a restructured implementation of finance operations.

These organizational initiatives began in November and will continue into early 2012. These initiatives will be complemented by the process and procedural changes already under



**Doug Frate**  
Interim Deputy Secretary  
for Intermodal and Freight



**Christy Hall**  
Deputy Director for  
Finance and Administration



**Andy Leaphart**  
Director of  
Support Services



**Wendy Nicholas**  
Chief  
of Staff

way at SCDOT.

The initial reorganization of Headquarters has resulted in some personnel changes. The Secretary selected Christy Hall, District Engineering Administrator (DEA) for District 2, headquartered in Greenwood to fill the position of Deputy Secretary for Finance and Administration. Hall is an 18-year veteran of SCDOT. She began her career at SCDOT in Road Design and held a number of management positions including Program Manager, District Construction Engineer for District 3 and District Engineering Administrator for District 2.

Hall holds a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from Clemson

University. She has earned a Professional Engineer's license (PE) and she is a graduate of the National Certified Public Manager Program (CPM). Hall officially began leading the process of reorganizing the Finance and Administration Division on Nov. 7. Angela Feaster who had served in that position since 2010 has assumed other duties in the agency.

St. Onge also asked Hart Baker, who had served as Deputy Secretary of the Intermodal and Freight Programs Division since 2010, to move back to the Legal Office. Baker is a career attorney of great repute whose return to full-time legal work aids in addressing the heavy

workload in the legal area.

Doug Frate, a long-serving transit planning professional, will lead the Intermodal and Freight Programs Division on an interim basis.

St. Onge announced the selection of Wendy Nicholas on Nov. 9 to take on the duties of the newly created position of Chief of Staff. Nicholas' previous experience includes working eight years in the SC Senate and serving as an Executive Assistant at SCDOT for five years. She has a degree in History from the University of South Carolina.

St. Onge also announced in mid-November that Andy Leaphart was selected to the newly created position of Direc-

tor of Support Services. Support Services is comprised of the Offices of Customer Relations, Information Technology, Facilities Management, Business Development and Special Programs and Communications. Leaphart will report directly to Secretary St. Onge.

Leaphart began his SCDOT career in Traffic Engineering in 1992 after earning a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from Clemson University. He spent the last four years serving as the Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations. He holds a Professional Engineer's license (PE). He is a graduate of Leadership South Carolina and the Certified Public Manager's Programs.

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# Letters we liked

## To Tony Sheppard, Director of Traffic Engineering:

I am writing to commend employee John Williams for his professionalism, competence and assistance on Aug. 18, 2011.

I was 'stranded' with a flat tire during 5 o'clock traffic on I-26 headed out of Columbia. I was in a 'dangerous' location and the worse possible time to travel on I-26 (rush hour), and the "very worst time" to have a car break-down.

I called AAA, and although I told them I needed help right away and was in a dangerous location, I was told it could be up to an hour before they could provide help! After waiting (and worrying that a car traveling at 60 miles per hour would crash into the back of my SUV, resulting in a huge fire and loss of life...) my friend contacted the state highway patrol and SCDOT (both responded very quickly to the scene).

I was greatly relieved when SCDOT showed up with the big, blue truck. Mr. Williams was the SCDOT employee who responded. He was extremely polite, very calm, readily and efficiently changed my tire and did so with a wonderful caring attitude. He shared that he was former military, who just enjoys helping folks.

I, too, am a state employee (30+ years), and have to share that Mr. Williams exem-

plifies all that is right with State government!

Thank you, again, Mr. Williams, and thank you SCDOT! The "incident response" program works and is worth every tax dollar that is spent by citizens of SC. Good Job!

Cordially,

**Daphne H. Battle**  
Columbia, SC

## To SCDOT:

While driving through South Carolina on Saturday, Oct. 29, 2011 in a 30' RV I ran out of gas on I-95 north in the northern part of your state. The RV was barely off the road very close to an exit. While outside the vehicle, within minutes I saw an SCDOT truck pull up behind me - what a God-send!

The driver pulled out his gas can, and poured enough gas for me to get to the gas station just off the exit - AND he said there was no charge - AND he followed me to the gas station. I was impressed when I entered your state on I-95 N from Georgia and was even more impressed and thankful for the service I received from SCDOT.

Hats off to your southern hospitality!!!

**Rich Tufarolo**  
(Email from comments page)

## To SCDOT:

I cannot thank the SCDOT enough for taking such good care of me when my car broke down on the interstate.

I was on 77 at exit 2 and on my way back home in southwest Virginia when my car broke down. I was by myself and did not have any idea what was going on with my car. The radio stopped playing, the air conditioning went out and the windows would not roll down and it was literally 99 degrees outside and I was stranded on the interstate with no stores in sight.

I was only there for about 2 minutes when the SCDOT truck came to my rescue. I am so sorry that I did not get his name but it was on Labor Day at around 1:00 p.m. He was so very nice and reassuring that I would be alright. He knew immediately that it was my alternator. He said that my battery would not hold charge for very long but he would try to charge it enough to get me to an exit where I could get some help. While he was with me, some other man came up behind my car with a wrecker. The SCDOT man asked me if I had called anyone and I had not. He said he would take care of this. He told the "scalper" that he was helping me and I did not need the wrecker. I was so very grateful for his assistance. He even had a phone book and gave me the phone numbers of reputable

businesses that could help me. It was Labor Day so he was very patient until I found someone that could help. He assured me that if my car broke down before I made it to the next exit, just to pull over and he would boost my battery again. I just wanted to say thank you for your assistance and I hope that if I ever need assistance in Virginia that my home state will have the personnel that South Carolina does.

**Rebekah Ritter**  
(Email from comments page)

## To Abbeville Maintenance:

I would like to thank you for your quick response to my request regarding the Greenwood Christian School sign on Old Abbeville Highway. I was quite pleased to arrive to school and witness crews trimming the branches which were obstructing a clear view of the sign just two days after placing my request.

I realize that your department covers a vast area and has many important tasks to complete and spaces to maintain. Being new to South Carolina, and specifically Greenwood, your efficient completion of my phone request is quite impressive as was your kind employee who handled my call.

**Christopher D. Johns, Head of School,**  
Greenwood Christian School

## The South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission



**Daniel H. Isaac Jr.**  
1st Congressional District



**J. Craig Forrest**  
2nd Congressional District



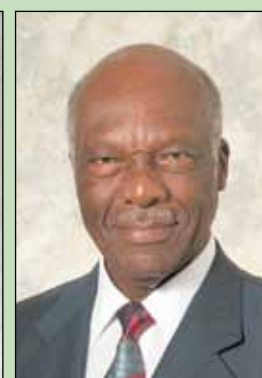
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6th Congressional District



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Robert J. St. Onge Jr. is the South Carolina Secretary of Transportation.



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# Senate Transportation Committee focuses on SCDOT finances



Deputy Secretary for Engineering John Walsh, left, discusses SCDOT's construction and payment processes at a special Senate Transportation Committee meeting on Sept. 8.

By Bob Kudelka

Secretary of Transportation Robert J. St. Onge gave state senators the facts concerning SCDOT's complex finances at a September meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee.

During the three-hour meeting, St. Onge answered senators' questions after media reports of contractor payments being

behind schedule this past summer.

In frank exchanges with senators, St. Onge offered no excuses about missed debt payments which had since been paid. He cited oversight caused in part by fiscal year end close-out activities and implementation of the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS), a software system designed to standardize business process

throughout state government.

Add to the mix good weather that helped contractors finish spring and summer jobs sooner, and it ended up being a "perfect storm."

"There was not enough money to pay the bills in the time frame to which the contractors had become accustomed," St. Onge said.

St. Onge was asked about inheriting a problem that surfaced just two months into his appointment as Secretary.

"It happened on my watch; this is my problem," St. Onge said. "I'll take responsibility for me and the agency."

St. Onge said in response the agency took several actions including cost savings measures; frequent communication with industry partners; weekly news releases to inform the public; early reimbursement by FHWA of \$52 million; ongoing revision of internal management procedures; deferred lettings for August and September; and deferred capital improvements and purchases.

"Key to this is that we maintain an open dialogue with our government and industry partners so that everybody understands the effects of what we're doing," St. Onge said. "I do

believe in the policy of no surprises...We have to keep the communications open and correct. Early information that is not accurate causes us more problems."

While contractors need timely payments from the agency, they also have expressed worry about the agency reducing or deferring lettings.

"They're primary concern was, 'Keep the work coming,'" St. Onge said.

St. Onge said that the main complaint he hears from the public is the conditions of our roads. It's something St. Onge has seen firsthand during his visits to all 46 counties since his appointment as Secretary.

"We do our level best, with the resources we have, to fix the roads," he said. "We would much rather repave than pothole fill. Pothole filler lasts, three, four, five or six months, and it is expensive. We would be better off repaving, but we just don't have the resources to pave as many of them as we would like."

Compared to neighboring state DOTs, SCDOT has a far smaller budget. For instance, Georgia DOT's budget is about twice as large as SCDOT's and has more employees, but SCDOT maintains nearly 2½

times the miles of roads.

Since 1993, South Carolina's population has increased 25 percent while gas tax revenues have remained flat.

The agency has made several cost-cutting measures including closure of selected rest areas; reduced maintenance of commercial truck parking areas; reduced equipment purchases; reduced contracted facilities maintenance; suspended capital improvement program; reduced highway maintenance contracts; partial hiring freeze that has created 892 vacancies since 2008, with selective hiring for critical positions only; and reduced outside legal counsel and consultants.

Some senators asked about the SCDOT Commission's resolution requesting the issuance of up to \$344 million in State Highway Bonds to fund I-85 at U.S. 276 (Laurens Road) Interchange in Greenville County (reconstruct interchange); I-73 from I-95 to U.S. 501 in Dillon County (new construction); Columbia Airport Expressway/I-26 in Lexington County (new construction/project completion); I-26 from Montague Avenue to Exit 218 in Charleston County (widening); and I-26 from U.S. 17 Alt. to Jedburg Road in Berkeley County (widening).

Bonding for each of these projects must be approved by the Joint Bond Review Committee and the Budget and Control Board.

St. Onge was asked if he expressed any concerns to the Commission about its desire to borrow money for the projects.

"I fundamentally said that I understand this is something you, the Commission, can do and I hope you put as much energy and as much effort into helping me find the resources I need to do system preservation," St. Onge said. "They were very positive about that comment."

St. Onge said Chairman Danny Isaac appointed Commissioner Craig Forrest to lead a subcommittee to study revenue enhancing capabilities. The committee was formed over the summer and held its first meeting in September.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Members of the SCDOT Commission, Deputy Secretary for Engineering John Walsh and Angela Feaster listen as Secretary Robert J. St. Onge discusses the financial situation at SCDOT before the Senate Transportation Committee. Also in the audience is State Treasurer Curtis Loftis.



# Secretary of Transportation works on SCDOT's cash flow challenges

By Pete Poore

Secretary Robert St. Onge has spent the summer and fall of 2011 managing the cash flow challenges SCDOT has faced since they arose in mid-summer. "Managing" is the key word in this process to bring SCDOT's cash flow back into balance, and begin the efforts to raise average day-to-day balances to higher levels.

"We need to manage our way through these challenges," said St. Onge. "The problems didn't pop up overnight and they can't be fixed in a day or a week," he added. (See **Senate Meeting Focuses on SCDOT Finances on page 3.**)

The Secretary has led efforts to coordinate and synchronize all of the agency's financial systems involved in projecting cash flow needs during the life of the numerous projects that have been and will be let, while figuring monthly state fuel tax revenue, reimbursements from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), a steady stream of invoices from both contractors and vendors as well as debt service into the equation.

Managing the challenges has re-

quired a reinforcement of systems in place and implementing new processes. A reorganization of the structure at Headquarters that had been envisioned by St. Onge soon after his arrival at SCDOT, has also been part of the solution. (See **SCDOT Reorganization on page 1.**)

Throughout the challenges, some key points should be noted: SCDOT has met its payrolls, contractors have been paid, no contracts have been interrupted or cancelled; and we continue the effort to improve the state's highways.

St. Onge and staff provided a detailed update for the SCDOT Commission and the media in October, and made himself available for questions at the Nov. 3 Budget and Control Board monthly meeting to update SCDOT's progress.

Here are some of the major points made in the presentation to the Commission and the media in October:

- A new management effort, the Project and Resource Analysis Meeting (PRAM) meets once a week. This is a team of key leaders in each Division that deal with procurement, obligations and cash flow.
- Members of the PRAM team consider

*"The problems didn't pop up overnight and they can't be fixed in a day or a week."*

**Robert J. St. Onge**  
SC Secretary of Transportation

all of the payouts that SCDOT is obligated to make, particularly the five major categories: Construction contracts, Maintenance Program, Procurement/Payroll, Debt service and Consultant contracts.

- The PRAM team looks at the other side of the ledger to consider revenues; FHWA reimbursements, projected state gas tax revenues, non-federal aid highway fund revenues and miscellaneous revenues.
- The PRAM team is charged with us-

ing project development timelines, which vary from two months to eight years and beyond, to forecast the payout timelines throughout the life cycle of a given project.

• The PRAM group must evaluate letting cycles, design-build projects, the expected value of work to be completed on active and future construction projects, payouts in the Maintenance Program, professional services contracts, purchase orders and payroll to reach a delicate balance between engineering planning and financial planning.

St. Onge outlined efforts being undertaken to enhance revenue. Those measures include partnering with the FHWA to seek out additional reimbursable projects and advanced billing of debt payments annually. This move was made in the summer of 2011 to provide SCDOT with \$52 million in reimbursements in one payment, instead of monthly reimbursements spread out over one year.

The job ahead in 2012 according to St. Onge is to get SCDOT's financial house in order, not only to correct the problems, but to help the agency become as efficient as it can be with the limited resources available.

## SCDOT Commission forms new Revenue Enhancement Committee

By Bob Kudelka

Commissioner Craig Forrest is chairman of a new committee looking for ways to clearly identify the needs, both operating and capital, of the department and provide "a menu of funding opportunities to address the anticipated shortfall."

"It's a big, big challenge," the 2nd Congressional District Commissioner said at the initial meeting of the Transportation Revenue Enhancement Committee held in Columbia on Sept. 14.

"Everything is on the table, and we're going to make a case for it and we're going to have a real package to put together for first of the all the Commission to adopt and to send on to the Governor and the Legislature," Forrest said before the meeting.

Forrest said Commission Chairman Danny Isaac asked him to chair the committee based on Forrest's comments made during his confirmation process.

"I was asked the two biggest issues or problems with DOT and I said the size of the highway system and also the funding streams that come into the Department to implement our programs," Forrest said.

The committee's first meeting laid the groundwork for what is planned to be a series of monthly meetings culminating after November 2012. Initial meetings will be held in Columbia with meetings expected

across the state beginning next spring.

Several committee members said the needs are great at the department.

"I think DOT has done an excellent job with the resources they've had over the years," said Ron Joye, a retired employee. "Everybody says, 'Cut, cut, cut, cut.' I can tell you right now, in my opinion, DOT is cut down to the marrow of the bone," Joye said. "They've borrowed from Peter to pay Paul. The problem is Peter's left town and Paul's broke."

Committee member Rick Todd said he's served on other committees over the years, and expressed his concerns about the difficulty of the challenge it faces.

"This is the worst political climate I have ever seen in my career," Todd said.

Forrest said at this point, there is no such thing as a bad idea.

"Yes, it's going to be a tough road," Forrest said. "But we're going to tackle the issue and really there is no good time to do this. Right now, I think everything's on the table including tolling, which is a pretty controversial subject in the Carolinas."

Members of the committee include: Chairman Craig Forrest, SCDOT Commission; Robert Bartlett, former Pennsylvania DOT Secretary; Deborah Bass, SC Alliance to Fix Our Roads; Chriswell Bickley, Jr., Lowcountry Council of Governments; Danny Black, Southern Carolina Alliance; Roger DeCaigny, Beaufort



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**Commissioner Craig Forrest, left, leads the first meeting of the Revenue Enhancement Committee on Sept. 14. The committee was formed to identify the financial needs and solutions for SCDOT.**

County Transportation Commission; William DuBose; SC Concrete Pavement Association; Scott Fant, Carolina AGC – Sloan Construction Co.; Blake Hodge, Hampton County Public Works; Matt Jolliff; Mining Assoc., of SC; Joe Jones, SC

Society of Professional Engineers; Jeff Lord, Walterboro City Manager; Mike Meyer, Hampton County Finance; Rick Todd, SC Trucking Association; and Ken Willingham, former SCDOT Commissioner.



# Infrastructure thefts grate SCDOT

*SCDOT manhole covers, storm grates stolen across the state*

By Bob Kudelka

**T**hieves have been busy along South Carolina highways.

More than 100 storm drain grates have been stolen along Interstate 85 in Anderson County and U.S. 276 in Greenville County. Other items from manhole covers to pieces of guardrails have been reported stolen across the state.

"This is very possibly the most widespread case of infrastructure theft on our highways that has ever occurred in South Carolina," said State Maintenance Engineer David Cook.

"These thefts are very serious and present potential hazards to the motoring public. They also will result in unnecessary costs to taxpayers and traffic congestion when we are forced to close lanes to replace these items."

In Anderson County, 68 two-piece grates were stolen on I-85 between mile marker 18 and mile marker 40 along the northbound

and southbound lanes. The grates were in the median shoulder next to the barrier wall. The thefts are believed to have occurred over the Oct. 14-16 weekend.

In addition, in Greenville County, approximately 35 storm drain grates were stolen from U.S. 276. Recently, there have been an additional 22 storm drain grates stolen from other routes in Greenville County including on I-85.

The cast iron grates are heavy and likely required at least 2 people to lift, Cook said.

The stolen storm drain grates left behind holes that "would be devastating for a motorcyclist or motorist," he said.

"Typically, a motorist could hit it if they pull off the road or run off the road," Cook said. "It's also dangerous for whoever is stealing them and they could cause a serious accident by stopping their vehicle to commit this crime."

Motorists are advised to report any suspicious activity on our roads to law enforcement or call 911.

Cook said it's possible the stolen items may be taken to a recycling center. Anyone with information is asked to contact law enforcement.

After SCDOT issued a news release alerting the public of the thefts, word spread as far as Europe, and people have come forward with tips and even photos of possible criminal activity, Cook

said. The information has been passed along to law enforcement.

SCDOT crews temporarily used cones to alert motorists of the areas where grates were stolen and the agency began the process of ordering replacements.

To prevent further thefts, the grates that were replaced were being tack welded into place where possible, Cook said. In

addition, District 2's then DEA, Christy Hall, asked the Office of Materials and Research to test non-metal grates for possible use.

"That could be a long-term solution because it wouldn't have the salvage value a steel product would," Cook said.

Cook said other recent infrastructure thefts have occurred in-

Each storm drain grate costs between \$86 to \$105 depending on the type and size. This does not include the cost of installation.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Thirty-five storm drain grates have been stolen along U.S. 276 in Greenville near Furman University. Here, Justin Coe of Greenville Maintenance installs a grate to replace one that was stolen. Crews are in the process of welding the grates into place to prevent future thefts.

cluding:

- More than 30 manhole covers have been stolen in the Columbia area of Richland County in the past few months.

- Guardrail pieces have been stolen along secondary roads in Allendale and Hampton counties. These were critical pieces in the guardrail design aimed at protecting vehicles.

- Guardrail pieces were stolen in Dillon County.

- Seven manhole covers and four storm drain grates were stolen in Darlington County.

- In addition to the 68 storm drain grates stolen from I-85 in Anderson County, manhole covers and guardrail pieces have been stolen in the Anderson area.

- Contractors working on construction projects in Laurens County have reported rebar being stolen from bridge construction sites and batteries stolen from equipment.

- Georgetown County: Ten grates stolen on U.S. 17 and U.S. 521.

- Darlington County: On I-20 at the parking area, 11 manhole covers, four grates stolen.

- Florence County: Three manhole covers stolen.

- Dillon County: More than 200 pieces of guardrail, three manhole covers stolen.

- Horry County: 10 manhole covers and 1 grate stolen.

- Marlboro County: 3 grates and 3 manhole covers stolen.





PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Construction workers from Bridge Company Inc. of Orangeburg work on Interstate 95 on Sept. 28. The repair project included new concrete decking and guardrails for both lanes along a section of the bridge near mile marker 100.

# I-95 repairs finished ahead of schedule, before holiday traffic

By Bob Kudelka

**I**t's never fun to close a lane of an interstate highway.

But when one lane of Interstate 95 northbound had to be shut down for several weeks of repair work this fall leaving just one lane open, District 7 Construction Engineer Jim Porth knew there was a lot at stake.

Although work was scheduled to end Nov. 10, even the slightest chance of a lane still closed over the busy Thanksgiving weekend was enough to give veteran highway workers some restless nights.

If that happened, Porth knew traffic could easily back up 10 or 11 miles.

"That was always in the back of our minds," said Porth. "We knew we had to get it done."

The I-95 bridge over Lake Marion at Santee was built in the 1960s. Earlier this year, a routine inspection by SCDOT bridge inspectors showed concrete deteriorating on the bridge deck in the northbound lanes.

While the bridge was safe for travel, the condition warranted repairs before it worsened.

Realizing the work could take close to two months, agency leaders chose the schedule of after Labor Day and before Thanksgiving.

Another headache for engineers was trying to map out a detour route. With limited access across Lake Marion, that wasn't going to be easy.

Because no oversized/overweight loads would be allowed through the work zone, a detour was created to wind the loads through several primary routes and through Manning.

Motorists passing through the state who wished to avoid the work zone were ad-

vised to use alternate routes to Columbia and back on I-95 at Florence.

The contractor, Carolina Bridge Company Inc., of Orangeburg, began work in the early morning hours of Sept. 12.

Long hours and good weather helped the contractor reach the midway point by Oct. 4.

As the project moved along, there was more good news. Traffic at the lane closure was better than expected. The worst back-ups came on Friday afternoons, and even then they were less than a mile.

Porth and Jim Mayes, Resident Construction Engineer who oversaw the day-to-day work, attributed the traffic flow to a team effort at the Department that successfully got the word out to motorists about the lane closure to help them plan their trips.

"It was a great team effort from Headquarters to District 7," Porth said.

On Oct. 22, 19 days ahead of schedule, the project was completed and the lane closure was lifted.

"The project went very well," Porth said. "The contractor was diligent in devoting the time, working 12 to 14 hour days, six days a week. He had a good schedule and stuck to it, and the weather was good, so that wasn't an issue."

"Fortunately, we can all have a great Thanksgiving," Porth said.

He said other offices that assisted in making the project a success were the Director of Construction Office, the Bridge Construction Engineer's Office, the Office of Materials and Research, Columbia Traffic Management Center, Office of Oversize /Overweight Permits, Communications Office, Director of Maintenance Office, District 5 Maintenance, District 6 Maintenance, District 7 Maintenance, and the Clarendon Construction Office.



On Sept. 28, the workers were building forms to pour concrete guardrails.



The repairs were necessary because a section of the bridge decking was deteriorating.



# 3-year-old Lake Murray Dam walkway hits its stride

By Bob Kudelka

On a Friday morning in September, a crew of SCDOT employees from Lexington Maintenance was busy picking up litter and trimming weeds along the pedestrian walkway at the Lake Murray Dam.

Their work did not go unnoticed, as Lexington resident Dan Huneau and a friend were among those who stopped and said a few words of appreciation before resuming their walk.

"It really looks good," Huneau said. "I think it's a great benefit to the community – well done."

SCDOT employees Stavrou Parasdeses, David Weed, Lester Fry, Cliff Haltiwanger Jr., Charles Ivey and Russell McCormick tend to the walkway every two weeks to keep it looking good.

"We recognize that this facility is special," said District 1 DEA Thad Brunson. "This is a high attraction area in the county and the DOT is invested in this pedestrian facility. We do go a little out of the norm. We think it's worthwhile."

Since it opened as part of the S.C. 6 and S.C. 60 highway widening project in 2008, the 1.7-mile, 8-foot-wide walkway linking the Irmo and Lexington sides of the dam has been a popular spot for people exercising or just enjoying the views of Lake Murray.

And with recent improvements, the walkway is attracting people not only from Irmo and Lexington but other parts of the

state as well.

"Actually we've had people from out of the Midlands go there much like you or I would go while in Charleston and walk the Ravenel Bridge," Brunson said. "It's one of the things that you do when you're in the area."

Since it opened, SCDOT has partnered with Lexington County and the dam's owner, SCE&G, to improve the experience for users.

The county has installed call boxes with a direct line to the Lexington County Sheriff's Department, Brunson said. In addition, Lexington County has put up signs prohibiting animals after concerns from walkway users about pet waste.

"We have worked with SCE&G and Lexington County to address these issues since the opening," Brunson said, adding that since the animal prohibition signs went up there has been virtually no negative feedback.

SCE&G has recently expanded parking in the area, with free parking on the Lexington side of the dam for walkway users. There is also parking on the Irmo side.

Among those out for a walk on this day was Inez Moore Tenenbaum, who lives nearby off Corley Mill Road and commutes to Washington during the week. She said she cannot wait to get home on the weekends, and the dam is her favorite spot to walk.

"It's just beautiful here and a wonderful way to stay in shape," said Tenenbaum, Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**Call boxes have been placed at both ends and at the midpoint of the 1.7-mile Lake Murray Dam walkway. A sign reminding visitors that no animals are permitted is also making the pathway more enjoyable for everyone.**

Commission and a former South Carolina State Superintendent of Education. "You can run, you can walk. You see your neighbors and people out exercising. It makes me so grateful that I live in South Carolina."

"I'm a real supporter of the project and I appreciate the De-

partment of Transportation... This makes my weekend complete. To look out and see Lake Murray and the boats, it's magnificent."

Gary Hodo of Irmo is on pace to walk more than 1,000 miles this year. A retiree, he comes to the dam nearly every day for a brisk 4-mile walk.

Hodo said his walking routine has helped him feel better, sleep better and weigh 35 pounds less.

"My favorite place is right here," Hodo said. "I have never grown tired of being on this dam. I'm grateful to the minds that decided this would be a good thing. We need more of these."



**ABOVE: The widening project completed in 2008 includes bike lanes. Bicyclists traveling over the dam use the bike lanes that run 5.2 miles from Lexington to Irmo. RIGHT: The walkway offers a beautiful view of Lake Murray and is popular with both walkers and runners.**





# Vegetation Control for Safety program to reduce crashes

By Bob Kudelka

At an I-20/I-26 interchange off ramp, one pine tree was adorned with a wreath and a white cross with the word, "Mama," while others had chunks of bark missing. Knocked over road signs and other debris were strewn nearby in tall grass.

Evidence shows that 22 vehicles ran off the road at this ramp in the past 3½ years, including one fatality, said Joey Riddle, Safety Program Engineer. As in most cases, driving too fast and inattention were to blame, he said.

Riddle and other engineers at Traffic Engineering came up with a low-cost safety program using federal dollars to improve safety at this eastbound I-20 off ramp as well as four other area interchanges.



This memorial was erected on a tree on the I-20/I-26 interchange. The photos below show the tree line before and after cutting. After the cutting, vehicles are given more room to control or stop a vehicle that leaves the roadway.



I-20 / I-26 BEFORE

I-20 / I-26 AFTER



Joey Riddle, second left, discusses the vegetation control program with a film crew from the Criminal Justice Academy. The video magazine, "Line Up," featured a segment on SCDOT's vegetation control program.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR



I-20 / U.S. 1 BEFORE

I-20 / U.S. 1 AFTER



The before and after photographs of the I-20 and U.S. 1 interchange show how trees were removed to improve sight views for merging traffic.

The "Vegetation Control for Safety" program's goal is to reduce injuries and fatalities at three

Columbia area interchanges: I-20 at I-26; I-20 at S.C. 215; and I-20 at U.S. 1.

"We're really excited about the enhancement to safety with these projects," Riddle said.

The work began Aug. 16 and lasted approximately two weeks.

At the I-20 ramp site, Riddle and the Office of Communications met with the media on Aug. 15 to educate the public about the program.

"This is an off ramp with physical evidence of tree impacts," Riddle said. "We're looking to increase the recovery zone."

Trimming the vegetation will increase the distance from the ramp to the tree line from as little as 50 feet to up to 100 feet, Riddle said. This will give motorists more opportunity to recover. In addition, the ramp will be redone with a higher friction surface.

At the other two interchanges, vegetation trimming will allow motorists better sight lines for merging traffic.

"I think it's an extremely significant counter measure to reduce crashes and fatalities," Riddle said. "For a relatively low cost, we're able to improve three interchanges and expect to see significant reductions of crashes."

Total cost of the project was \$20,000.

At the 3 interchange areas listed above, there were a total of 834 reported crashes from 2007 to mid-2010. These 834 crashes resulted in 6 fatalities and 254 injuries.

Statewide, during this time only 5.5 percent of all crashes in South Carolina involved a vehicle striking a tree. However, those same crashes account for over 30 percent of all fatalities and injuries that occur in the state. Those statistics increase when only looking at interstates. On interstates, 6 percent of all crashes involve vehicles striking a tree but account for more than a third of all fatalities and injuries that occur on the interstates.



# Timber Management for Safety project trims I-95 median

By Bob Kudelka

**S**CDOT awarded a contract this fall to improve safety along a portion of I-95 in Colleton County through a pilot project called "Timber Management for Safety."

The project consisted of thinning out approximately 32 acres of timber within the 2.5 mile segment. The contractor was required to retain approximately 20 well-spaced, well-formed pines per acre for a "park-like appearance" in the center of the median.

"This additional clearance will give motorists more room to recover in unfortunate and extremely dangerous run off the road situations," said Tony Shepard, SCDOT's Director of Traffic Engineering. "We are trying to save lives and prevent tragedies from striking families of South Carolinians and our visitors."

The contractor began work Sept. 15 and was scheduled to complete by Nov. 14.

By the end of October, the contractor, L&J Inc., was ahead of schedule and had already removed all the timber, said Roger Bowers, Chief Geotechnician in SCDOT's Dorchester Construction Office.

"It's going well," Bowers said.

Remaining were just some finishing touches including planting grass in the median, he said.

Overall, the project went smoothly, especially considering the short amount of time given the contractor, Bowers said. Traffic was not an issue because day-time work was not done in any travel lanes. At night, there were some lane closures to allow for timber removal.

Bowers said safety of the motoring public was the goal of the program.

Over a five-year period, Colleton County had the second-highest number of highway fatalities involving trees in interstate medians in South Carolina. There were 14 interstate median fatalities due to trees in Colleton County from 2003-2008.

Trees are involved in 25 percent of all fatalities in South Carolina compared to 8 percent nationally, and account for one out of every five fatalities on the interstate.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The tree cutting project on Interstate 95 between mile markers 53 and 50 lasted 60 days, from Sept. 15 through Nov. 14.



Project Manager Roger Bowers, left, and Dorchester Resident Construction Engineer Behling Guess supervise the tree removal on Sept. 28.

This safety project was initiated through a joint partnership between SCDOT and the South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC). The SCFC recently completed an assessment of opportunities to harvest timber within the right of way along all interstate highways in South Carolina to improve forest health and aesthetics while also improving highway safety.

Through the assessment, this section of I-95 was identified as a potential pilot project.

The project, located between mile markers 50.6 and 53.1, was limited to the median of the interstate. The project's goal is to

improve safety by increasing the "clear zone" to provide for adequate recovery for vehicles leaving the roadway.

Before the project, the distance from the travel lane to the tree line in the median was approximately 30 feet along this portion of I-95. This clear zone was increased to approximately 46 feet through the Timber Management project.

"We're trying to reduce fixed object crashes and that was one of the highest areas where this was occurring," said Keith Riddle, Safety Project Engineer. "We'll be gathering crash data for the next three years" to create a before and after comparison.



A log loader collects the cut trees to stack them for loading. Trucks are only loaded at night using a closed lane at night to enter and exit the highway.



A scudder is used to mulch the remaining brush. L&J Inc. of Columbia is the prime contractor on the project which includes finishing the median by adding soil and grass.



# AWARDS • AWARDS • AWARDS • AWARDS

## *S. C. Department of Transportation recognized for excellence in variety of fields*

### Financial Reporting

**S**CDOT has been recognized with the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the US and Canada (GOFA). The award was earned for the agency's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the field of governmental accounting and financial reporting. The GOFA says this award represents a "significant accomplishment by a government entity and its management." The CAFR has been judged by an impartial

panel "to meet the high standards of the program including the demonstration of a constructive spirit of full disclosure to clearly communicate its financial story."

The SCDOT Finance Office has won this award for six consecutive years.

### Three AASHTO Awards

**S**CDOT has received two awards from AASHTO in recognition for the "Best Transportation Projects" in the Southeastern Region. The awards recognize state DOTs that are adapting to current economic situations with innovative approaches to completing projects more efficiently. SCDOT won an award in the "Under Budget" category for the widening and resurfacing of I-385 in Laurens County. The project was completed in July 2010. The I-385 project in Laurens County also won a national award from the American Concrete Paving Association (ACPA). The award is

for excellence in a rural divided highway project.

The second award was in the "Innovative Management" category for the "Plans Online" system. This system converted 1.9 million digitally scanned image files of construction plans and made them available on the internet. The digital system replaced the old cumbersome method of having to review plans in person. Plans Online is available internally to SCDOT employees and externally to surveyors, engineers and any city, county or local offices requiring access to SCDOT plans to complete their

work.

Plans Online has been selected as one of the Top Ten projects in the 2011 America's Transportation Awards competition.

SCDOT also won an AASHTO award in the annual National Transportation Public Affairs competition. SCDOT received the award for "In-House Video Production for External Use. The video funded by TASC demonstrates to the public the benefits of using public transportation, including safety and convenience. The video was produced by SCDOT Video Producer **Peter Tarpley**.



Peter Tarpley

### Service Worker Award

**S**CDOT's former District Engineering Administrator (DEA) for District 2 **Christy Hall** was presented with an award as the Service Worker of the Year by the Mayor of Anderson's Committee on Disability.

Hall was honored for her leadership in projects that made transportation and pedestrian rights of way accessible to all in South Carolina. District 2 is comprised of Abbeville, Anderson, Greenwood, Laurens, Newberry and Saluda Counties.



Christy Hall

National Alliance of Highway Beautification Agencies Chair Joyce Musick, left, of Missouri DOT presents the Outdoor Advertising Award to SCDOT's Keith C. Melvin, Carolyn B. Lindsay and Joyce R. Gardner.

### Outdoor Advertising Award

**T**he Outdoor Advertising office received a national award for better management of data and permitting processes.

All processes can now be accomplished on the web, which reduces costs and waiting periods for continuing and new clients.

The Outdoor Advertising Staff includes: **Carolyn B. Lindsay** - Midlands Region Outdoor Advertising Coordinator, **Joyce**

**R. Gardner** - Piedmont Region Outdoor Advertising Coordinator, **Randy Ponton** - Pee Dee Region Outdoor Advertising Coordinator, **Dorothy R. Erwin** - Low Country Region Outdoor Advertising Coordinator, **Linda L. Johnson** - Administrative Specialist, and **Keith C. Melvin** - Director, Outdoor Advertising, Building Management and Services.





# 2011 SASHTO Scholarships honor engineering students

By Bob Kudelka

Secretary of Transportation Robert J. St. Onge took a moment from a busy Commission meeting in September to congratulate ten 2011 SASHTO Scholarships recipients.

The scholarship contest is designed to benefit employees, spouses of employees and dependents of employees actively enrolled in higher education.

All awards were funded through the Southeastern Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (SASHTO) and were earmarked solely for these awards.

This year, SCDOT received 26 scholarship applications. Winners were selected based on grade point averages, test scores, financial need and essay requirements.

Nine students received \$2,500 to assist in their education at a four-year college or university, and \$1,500 was awarded to one applicant pursuing a degree at a technical or two-year college.

"It's just really nice not having to worry about money so much and I can focus on my studies," said recipient Andrew Patterson, a freshman at the University of South Carolina, who hopes one day to help build rockets.

Chad Rawls, a senior at USC and a 15-year veteran of SCDOT, said the scholarship comes at a time of rising tuition.

"The \$2,500 scholarship covers about three-fourths of one semester - so that's great," Rawls said.

Here's a look at this year's winners:

## Kristen Bandelier

**Kristen Bandelier** is a sophomore at Midlands Technical College with a 4.0 GPA. She assists with Equine Therapy Maintenance Care, and involved with animal and aquamarine care. She is employed with SCDOT in the Right of Way office.

## Briana Bethea

**Briana Bethea** is a senior at the College of Charleston. She volunteers for the Red Cross, and volunteered for the Cooper River Bridge Run. Her stepfather, William Legette, works in the Marion Maintenance office of SCDOT.

## Scurry Elrod

**Scurry Elrod** is a freshman at the Citadel. He is actively involved with Chappells Baptist Church, as a youth leader, nursery worker and on the communion committee. He is the son of Ann Ward, who works in SCDOT's District Two office.

## Andrew Patterson

**Andrew Patterson** is a freshman at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. He recently graduated from Blythewood High School with a 3.926 GPA. His father, Glenn Patterson, is employed at SCDOT in the RPG-4 Engineering group.

## Brett McCutchan

**Brett McCutchan** is a junior at the University of South Carolina. He volunteers for Habitat for Humanity, and is involved in regional, national and international missions. He is an employee of SCDOT, and works for District 1 Engineering.

## Chad Rawls

**Chad Rawls** is a senior at the University of South Carolina. He is a member of the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society and Chi-Epsilon Civil Engineering Honor Society. He is an employee of SCDOT, working in Traffic Engineering at Headquarters.

## Alyssa Richardson

**Alyssa Richardson** is a senior at Furman University. She is actively involved in many collegiate and national groups, including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Ladies of Distinction Mentoring. Her mother, Betty Richardson, works in the DBE Office at SCDOT.

## Gabriela Ruiz

**Gabriela Ruiz** is a freshman at Wofford College in Spartanburg. She is a recent graduate of Lexington High School, where she participated in numerous state, national, and international service projects, including translating and tutoring for non-English speaking students. Her father, Roberto Ruiz, works in SCDOT's RPG-2 group.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The 2011 SASHTO Scholarship winners are, from left: Kristen Bandelier, Andrew Patterson, Brett McCutchan, Chad Rawls and Gabriela Ruiz. Not pictured: Briana Bethea, Scurry Elrod, Alyssa Richardson, Forrest Snipes and George Townsend.

## Forrest Snipes

**Forrest Snipes** is a junior at the University of South Carolina. He volunteers for several organizations, including the American Red Cross, Operation Christmas Child, and the Lee County Pride Task Force. He is the son of Sandra Snipes, who works in the Lee County Maintenance office at SCDOT.

## George Townsend

**George Townsend** is a freshman at Clemson University. He is a recent graduate of Lake View High School, graduating with a 3.6 GPA. He was president of the Lake View High student body, president of the Future Farmers of America, president of the Principal's council, and played football, baseball and golf. He is the son of Dennis Townsend, District Engineering Administrator for District 5.

**D**uring the summer of 2011, SCDOT facilitated a scholarship contest to benefit employees, spouses of employees, and dependents of employees actively enrolled in higher education. This contest was made possible through SCDOT's membership in the Southeastern Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (SASHTO). As one of 13 members of SASHTO, SCDOT receives scholarship funds each year at the conclusion of SASHTO's annual conference. According to SASHTO bylaws, all funds received are earmarked solely for scholarship awards.

SCDOT typically facilitates the scholarship contest in late spring/early summer of each year. Only full-time SCDOT employees and their dependents attending a two- or four-year institution are eligible. Applicants are judged on family need, SAT/ACT scores, overall GPA, and an essay component.

**For information on next year's SASHTO scholarship, contact Agency Events Coordinator Tina Kennedy at [KennedyTB@scdot.org](mailto:KennedyTB@scdot.org) or (803) 737-5022.**



# RETIREMENTS

**Faye J. Shehan**, of Hopkins, a fiscal technician I from Accounting, retired from Accounting on June 29, 2010, after 22 years of service.

**Ronnie E. Addis** retired Aug. 16 from Oconee Maintenance after 11 years of service.

**Larry E. Akins** retired Sept. 18 from Greenwood Construction after 12 years of service.

**Daniel L. Argoe** retired Oct. 2 from Aiken Maintenance after 19 years of service.

**Samuel E. Bayles** retired Aug. 31 from Berkeley Maintenance after 17 years of service.

**David Bowman Jr.** retired Sept. 3 from Orangeburg Maintenance after 17 years of service.

**Debra H. Bradham** retired Sept. 7 from Rights of Way after 30 years of service.

**Wendell H. Cantley** retired Oct. 1 from Williamsburg Maintenance after 7 years of service.

**Ricky V. Childs** retired Sept. 3 from

Lancaster Construction after 27 years of service.

**Gary L. Dooley** retired Aug. 22 from Aiken Maintenance after 21 years of service.

**Lonnie Fowler** retired Sept. 1 from Horry 1 Maintenance after 15 years of service.

**Paul C. Garrison** retired Sept. 17 from District 3 Office after 26 years of service.

**Jonathan Gibbs** retired Aug. 31 from District 6 Bridge Inspection after 33 years of service.

**Dawn E. Loner** retired Sept. 24 from Traffic Engineering after 26 years of service.

**Floyd K. Mobley** retired Sept. 1 from Chester Maintenance after 6 years of service.

**Frederick J. Muchow** retired Sept. 1 from District 3 Office after 23 years of service.

**Mary M. Nix** retired Sept. 1 from Hampton Maintenance after 16 years of

service.

**Cynthia A. Phillips** retired Aug. 24 from Beaufort Maintenance after 21 years of service.

**Scott D. Riles Jr.** retired Sept. 21 from RPG 2-Peedee after 15 years of service.

**William R. Tucker** retired Aug. 3 from Lancaster Maintenance 17 years of service.

**David B. Ward** retired Aug. 18 from District 5 Office after 10 years of service.

**Joe S. Patterson** retired Aug. 22 from York Maintenance after 24 years of service.

**Eugene J. Cantrell** retired Oct. 1 from District 3 Office after 9 years of service.

**Thomas J. McArdle Jr.** retired Oct. 21 from Materials and Research after 24 years of service.

**Clarence Moore Jr.** retired Oct. 14 from Colleton Maintenance after 24 years of service.

**Rosa L. Parker** retired Oct. 2 from District 6 Bridge Inspection after 31 years of service.

# DEATHS

**Mitchell T. Bowers**, of Lancaster Maintenance, died Aug. 29.

**Leo Washington**, of Colleton Maintenance, died Sept. 7.

**Kathryn Tucker Greene Brown Sessions**, a retiree from Traffic Engineering, died May 29.

## Retiring?

Don't miss a single issue  
of THE CONNECTOR!

**S**CDOT retirees can continue to receive THE CONNECTOR by contacting the SCDOT Communications Office when they retire.

Send us an email with your name, mailing address and retirement date. Please be sure to include your full address including zip code.

Send the info to:  
MayberryJE@SCDOT.org.

# PROMOTIONS

**Adam Bishop**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. II, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. III at Colleton Maintenance.

**Kenneth Collins**, OSHA Officer II, promoted to OSHA Officer III at Dist. 1 Office.

**Paul T. Collins**, Senior Geo. Tech., promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. II at Horry 1 Maintenance.

**James C. Johnson**, Assistant Geo. Tech., promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at Florence Construction.

**Roy A Jeffcoat**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at District 7 Bridge Inspection.

**John A. Caver Jr.**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. III, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. IV at RPG 4.

**Brian Dix**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. II, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. III at RPG 2.

**Katherine D. Scott**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. I, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. II at Darlington Construction.

**Charles R. Adcox**, Senior Geo. Tech., promoted to Chief Geo. Tech. at District 2 Bridge Inspection.

**Joseph Cannon**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Greenville Maintenance.

**Charles L. Corrigan III**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. I, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. II at Marion Construction.

**Christopher D. Fellows**, Trades Specialist IV, promoted to Trades Specialist V at Greenwood Maintenance.

**Javson R. Jordan**, Engr./Engr. Assoc.

II, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. III at OMR.

**Foy Trantham**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Greenville Maintenance.

**Jason S. Rabon**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Marion Maintenance.

**John W. Dix**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Marion Maintenance.

**Joseph Reid Jr.**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Berkeley Maintenance.

**Claude M. Sexton**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Berkeley Maintenance.

**Sammie L. Wright**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Assistant Geo. Tech. at Dillon Maintenance.

**Henry J. Littles**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Marlboro Maintenance.

**Margaret R. Harrington**, Admin. Specialist I, promoted to Supply Specialist III at Williamsburg Maintenance.

**James D. McNair Jr.**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Titus L. Bethea**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Dillon Maintenance.

**Jared A. Bright**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Chester Maintenance.

**Justin W. Galloway**, Trades Specialist

II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Florence Maintenance.

**Juan Rosado**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Florence Maintenance.

**Charles R. Skipper Jr.**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Marion Maintenance.

**Otis N. Nero**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Florence Maintenance.

**Richard A. Boyd**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Horry 1 Maintenance.

**Jake Randall Hodge Jr.**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Supply Specialist III at Lee Maintenance.

**Anthony Belton**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trade Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Tyron Keller**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Tavius O. Tucker**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Stuart M. Stover**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Kershaw Maintenance.

**Gene R. Taylor**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Kershaw Maintenance.

## PROMOTIONS

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## Suggestion Box

**W**e're open to suggestions. How can we make *The Connector* better?

Do you have an idea for an article or a feature story? What changes would you like to suggest in the newspaper's contents, format or design? What features would you like to see added to the publication? What features would you prefer that we discontinue? You may send your comments to:

**The Connector**  
SCDOT, P.O. Box 191  
Columbia, SC 29202.

You may also submit comments online at [D8Connector@scdot.org](mailto:D8Connector@scdot.org).

Would you like to speak to us personally about The Connector? Call Stan Shealy at (803) 737-1064.



## PROMOTIONS

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**Denise H. Robinson**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Kershaw Maintenance.

**Travis L. Jenkins**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Sumter Maintenance.

**Troy J. Harvin**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Sumter Maintenance.

**Jason Heywood**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Aiken Maintenance.

**Donna Frady**, Supply Specialist II, promoted to Admin Specialist II at Spartanburg Maintenance.

**Paul Dickert**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Allen Heyward Sr.**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Lexington Maintenance.

**Daryl Rowe**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Lexington Maintenance.

**Lester Fry Jr.**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Lexington Maintenance.

**Byron Gunter**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Lexington Maintenance.

**Justin Davis**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Greenville Maintenance.

**Evangelee Holmes**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades

Specialist IV at Allendale Maintenance.

**Crystal Morrow**, Supply Specialist III, promoted to Admin Asst. at Calhoun Maintenance.

**Ronald K. Richardson**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Horry 1 Maintenance.

**David Walker**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at District 3 Maintenance Ops.

**Elisabeth D. Bleasdale**, Admin. Asst., promoted to Program Coord. I at Environmental.

**Eric O. Deatherage**, Assistant Geo. Tech., promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at Lexington Construction.

**David D. Walker**, Assistant Geo. Tech., promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at Richland Construction.

**Robert Pfaff**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Julie L. Collins**, Admin. Specialist II, promoted to Admin. Asst. at Hampton Maintenance.

**Christopher Wilson**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Spartanburg Maintenance.

**Robert Redding**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Greenville Maintenance.

**Richard Ellis**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Spartanburg Maintenance.

**Stephen Smith**, Mechanic I, promoted to Mechanic III at Lexington Maintenance.

**William A. Thomas**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Greenwood Maintenance.

**Justin B. Dodgen**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Greenwood Maintenance.

**Brian A. Croft**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Allendale Maintenance.

**John Webb**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Greenville Maintenance.

**Daniel Floyd**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Greenville Maintenance.

**James B. Wollgast**, Mechanic I, promoted to Mechanic III at Richland Maintenance.

**William C. Kaigler**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Richland Maintenance.

**Joshua Durham**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Oconee Maintenance.

**Michael Thompson**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Greenville Maintenance.

**Gary Hamby**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Oconee Maintenance.

**Kenneth T. Bethea**, Associate Geo. Tech., promoted to Senior Geo. Tech. at Dillion Construction.

**Dale Massey**, Associate Geo. Tech., promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. I. at District 3 Office.

**John M. Hudson**, Assistant Geo. Tech., promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at Spartanburg Con-

struction.

**Jeremy D. Delaney**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at Spartanburg Maintenance.

**Robert W. Bachelder**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Incident Responder I at District 3 Office.

**Elisa C. Willis**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. I, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. II at Greenville Maintenance.

**Melanie Mobley**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. II, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. III at District 4 Office.

**Raymond R. Schmuck III**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Anderson Maintenance.

**Bradley D. Edwards**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Mechanic III at McCormick Maintenance.

**Jonathan E. Makison**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Anderson Maintenance.

**Amy T. Cardwell**, Admin. Asst., promoted to OSHA Officer II at Dillion Maintenance.

**James A. Godbold**, Mechanic III, promoted to Trades Specialist V at Marion Maintenance.

**Tracy L. Hebert**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Cherokee Maintenance.

**David D. Gamble**, Engr./Engr. Assoc. I, promoted to Engr./Engr. Assoc. II at York Maintenance.

**Brent C. Nelson**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Colleton Maintenance.

**Paul Mattis**, Trades Specialist

II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Beaufort Maintenance.

**Michael J. Coleman**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Beaufort Maintenance.

**Marvin Miller**, Mechanic I, promoted to Mechanic III at Beaufort Maintenance.

**Henry E. Bailey Jr.**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Berkeley Maintenance.

**Clarence Cummings**, Trades Specialist III, promoted to Trades Specialist IV at Beaufort Maintenance.

**Robert W. Brown**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Mechanic III at Allendale Maintenance.

**Jonathan R. Vaughn**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Anderson Maintenance.

**Shannon K. Burnett**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Trades Specialist III at Newberry Maintenance.

**Joshua K. Rowe**, Associate Geo. Tech., promoted to Associate Geo. Tech. at Newberry Maintenance.

**James N. Jones**, Trades Specialist V, promoted to Communications Mgr. at District 2 Traffic Signals.

**Jeremy Delaney**, Trades Specialist II, promoted to Assistant Geo. Tech. at Spartanburg Maintenance.

**Eric Deatherage**, Associate Geo. Tech., promoted to Senior Geo. Tech. at Lexington Construction B.

## SHM

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the alternative of temporarily repairing the old Great Pee Dee River Bridge. Our return on investment was obviously substantial, which allowed us to redirect savings to critical uses that were not possible if we had to repair the old bridge. In summary, SCDOT has been extremely pleased with the use of SHM technology and intends to aggressively deploy more solutions to better manage our inventory of structurally deficient bridges and to provide performance and preservation monitoring of other high value bridge assets. If we can safely defer only one in three planned repair or replacement actions, we believe our return on investment will be robust, while reducing local funding demand, enhancing safety and lowering system risk.

**Conclusion:** SCDOT is continuing to be a leader nationwide in the deployment of structural health monitoring and feels that this technology provides an excellent cost savings tool to both the public and the Department especially in light of limited funding for bridge infrastructure

needs. This commitment has led us to lead a consortium of states including Utah, Maine and Missouri along with other non-DOT partners in pursuing a TIGER III Grant worth \$9.9 million that would be shared among the participants.

We currently have structural health sensors installed on U.S. 17 southbound over the North Santee River near the Charleston/Georgetown county line and the Ravenel Bridge in Charleston. Although some may ask why install sensors on a relatively new structure such as the Ravenel Bridge, health monitoring is not just for critical condition bridges but also for monitoring the performance of "high value asset" bridges as well. As for the Ravenel Bridge, not only can we monitor the normal operational performance but also the response during a wind or seismic event.

The protocols and calculations for bridge design are there for a defined purpose and as some would say, there is a "method to the madness." However, real world experience has clearly indicated that bridges are not always built exactly according to plans and tend to carry more weight due to actual load distribution. Of course there is always the effect of deterioration and changes in load distribution

over time that must be accounted for and also the behavior and stresses due to thermal forces can be significantly higher than previously understood.

So why install sensors when calculations show the need for a potential load restriction? Sensor technology when correctly deployed may indicate that the strains and therefore the stresses are not as high as calculated on the member(s) in question. If the bridge is critical to the local, regional or even statewide economy just think of the benefits to the public by lowering or possibly eliminating the additional user cost incurred by having to detour. The bridge may also be critical for other reasons such as emergency response or evacuation needs. What about the savings in agency costs by safely delaying a replacement, rehabilitation or repair project or by modifying the extent of the project to save funds? Finally, this type data can assist an agency in bridge management decisions by providing an additional tool for more effective prioritizing of projects, especially with limited funding.

*For additional information on this exciting technology please contact Lee Floyd in the Bridge Maintenance Office.*



# Archaeologist Wayne Roberts on to new discoveries

By Bob Kudelka

**W**ayne Roberts was five years old when he first wanted to become an archaeologist.

He loved listening to his father's stories of "growing up on cotton fields and finding arrowheads as he plowed cotton.

"I thought it was so neat that there was another culture right here under our feet," Roberts said. "You have to admire the Indians and their resistance to intruders in trying to preserve their way of life. It was just always fascinating to me."

Roberts' fascination continued as he grew up and eventually led him to a career as an archaeologist at SCDOT. After 26 years at the agency, he plans to retire Jan. 6.

Known for high-profile work involving preservation of historical sites, Roberts' presentations at engineering conferences have routinely drawn large crowds.

"He's always been very knowledgeable and eager to share that knowledge with you," said Mark Lester, Director of Planning and Environmental. "He does it in a really interesting way. Most people are inherently interested in history, particularly our state's history, and he's a very good storyteller."

Roberts was born in Tennessee and grew up in North Carolina and South Carolina. After graduating from Greenville High School, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in anthropology from the University of South Carolina in 1973.

He received a master's degree from University of Tennessee in 1977 in anthropology. He spent about eight years doing contract work for the university.

In 1986, Roberts was hired as chief archaeologist at SCDOT. Over the years, there have been from one to three archaeologists at the agency. (Currently, there are two other archaeologists on staff, Chad Long and Jeff Craver.)

At SCDOT, archaeologists help the agency follow federal laws concerning cultural resources.

If a highway or bridge project uses federal funds, the agency must look for cultural resources and determine if they are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

"We have to do our best to first avoid the site; second, to minimize adverse effects; or third, to mitigate those adverse effects," Roberts said. "We can't just arbitrarily destroy it."

When Roberts joined SCDOT, he said he was met with skepticism on two fronts. State preservation officials were skeptical of highway department employees, while

highway engineers feared Roberts would be out to hurt their projects.

"I was persona non grata in both camps," Roberts said. "I saw my job was to establish trust on both sides and demonstrate I'm not working against anybody. I'm working here to protect the resources, but at the same time to see that these roads and bridges are built."

Roberts said engineers and preservationists began to find out both sides could succeed.

"A lot of times a slight shift in design can totally avoid a site and there's no problem," Roberts said.

Looking back on his career, Roberts said creating a trust between preservationists and highway engineers is one of his proudest accomplishments.

Lester agrees, saying Roberts "does have a good way of striking a balance between preservation and the need to deliver a transportation improvement. I know that's not an easy thing to do."

A good example is the preservation of the Fishdam Ford Battlefield near Carlisle.

While preparing for a bridge replacement project, SCDOT discovered the Revolutionary War battlefield site at Fishdam Ford.

The battle at Fishdam Ford was one of several American victories over the British during the South Carolina campaign of 1780. Ultimately, this successful American campaign drove the British out of South Carolina and contributed to the British surrender in 1781.

Normally, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and SCDOT would excavate any artifacts on a construction site that might be affected by construction. However, the geological nature of the archaeological site meant that excavation would take years and cost as much as \$2 million.

Rather than remove artifacts that would be directly impacted by the bridge replacement,

S C -

DOT partnered with other state and federal agencies to purchase and preserve the entire 143-acre Fishdam Ford Battlefield. This saved taxpayers approximately \$1.7 million. SCDOT then agreed to relocate the bridge construction project to a point further downstream to avoid damaging the battlefield.

Another highlight of Roberts' career is an archaeological project that has recently been completed.

An SCDOT-sponsored study of a Revolutionary War battlefield in Lancaster County uncovered artifacts that Roberts said shed light on what is known as "The Waxhaw Massacre."

SCDOT is building a new intersection improvement project at S.C. 522 (Rocky River Road) and S.C. 9. A new traffic signal has been installed, and new left turn lanes are planned.

SCDOT minimized the footprint of the project and mitigated its impact by sponsoring an archeological metal detector study of the battlefield.

The study identified where the battle took place through recovery of 154 items, including bullets and other military items such as a pocketknife and part of a British musket.

"It's new information on a very significant event in South Carolina history," Roberts said, "and something that historians should be looking at and talking about for years to come. It's one thing to speculate on what is known, but here we're able to confirm a lot of what happened."

The Battle of the Waxhaws took place during the American Revolution on May 29, 1780, near Lancaster between a Continental Army force led by Abraham Buford and a mainly Loyalist force led by Banastre Tarleton.

After reports of Tarleton rejecting the surrender of Buford's troops, the

American colonists began to call the battle "The Waxhaw Massacre."

Roberts said the battle is significant because it helped galvanize Americans who were ambivalent about the Revolution. Word spread that Patriot soldiers were slaughtered even after they tried to surrender. Roberts said the viciousness of Tarleton was dramatized in the Mel Gibson movie, "The Patriot."

"This got people upset and it revitalized the American war effort," Roberts said. "Whole new regiments were recruited in the Upstate."

According to Tarleton's after-battle report, the American rebel casualties were 113 men killed, 147 wounded. The British losses were 5 killed, 12 wounded.

Items found are being archived at the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology in Columbia as well as the new Lancaster County Museum, Roberts said.

On a recent morning, Roberts traveled to the Waxhaws site to inspect four large informational signs that have been erected at the site. The signs describe the battle as well as what was uncovered by archaeologists.

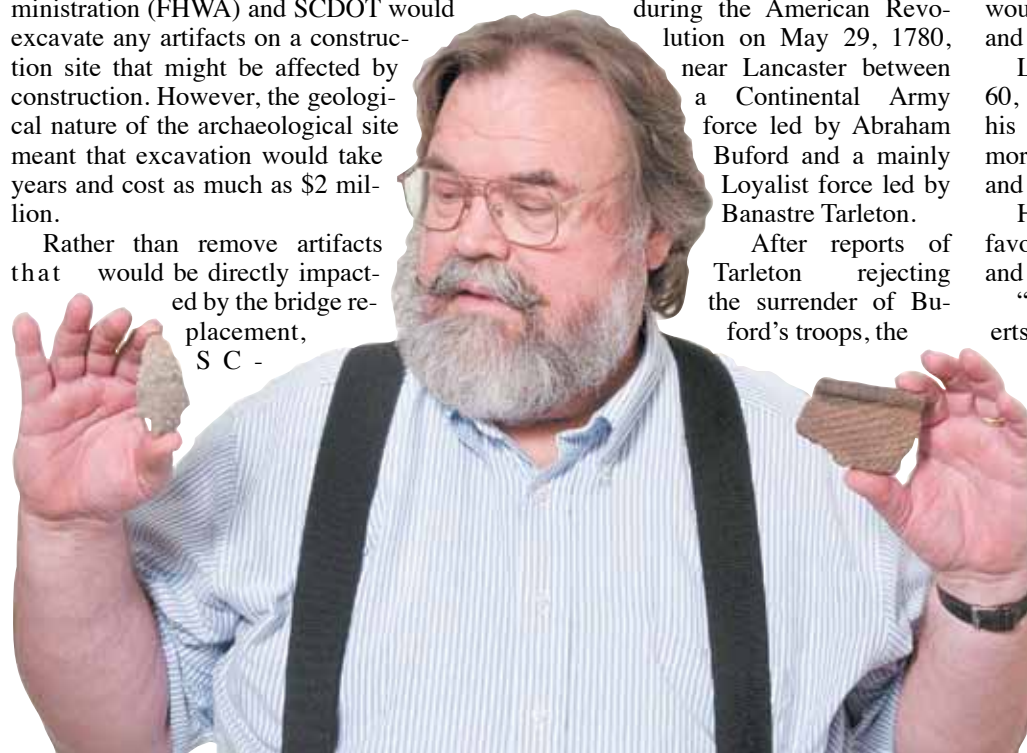
As Roberts surveyed the site, he questioned the battle strategy that led to the massacre. Indications are that Buford and his troops had cannons, but he chose not to open fire with them on the British. If he had, Roberts said, he probably could have retreated into North Carolina unmolested.

"But then again, there probably wouldn't have been this so called 'massacre,' and everybody in South Carolina would still be speaking English," he said and chuckled.

Looking ahead to retirement, Roberts, 60, who lives in Lexington County with his wife, Carol, said he plans to spend more time collecting and trading old guns and sabers.

He'll also get to do more of one of his favorite pastimes – driving around the state and stopping to check out historical sites.

"I've always enjoyed discovery," Roberts said. "It's always, 'What's out there?'"



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON

**SCDOT Archaeologist Wayne Roberts displays some of the historical items he has found over the years. Artifacts include pottery and arrowheads dating back thousands of years.**



# New S.C. 150 bridge reopens early

By Pete Poore

**T**he project to replace the S.C. 150 bridge crossing Interstate 85 near Gaffney in Cherokee County was completed on Oct. 21, 2011, 28 days ahead of schedule.

A tractor-trailer traveling northbound on the interstate crashed into the bridge in the early morning hours of May 22, 2011 and burst into flames. The driver and another occupant in the truck died in the crash.

The crash damaged the support columns of the bridge beyond repair. Interstate 85 northbound had to be closed temporarily. Secretary St. Onge issued an emergency order on May 23 to remove damaged portions of the bridge. A temporary detour was put in place until the northbound lanes could be reopened when the demolition work was complete two days later on May 24.

The contract for the replacement project was a “no excuses” agreement with an iron clad deadline of Nov. 17, 2011. The bridge and S.C. 150 in that vicinity were reopened for public use four weeks ahead of schedule.



**ABOVE:** The new bridge spans across Interstate 85 between the 92 and 93 mile markers near Gaffney.

**RIGHT:** The new bridge opened on Oct. 21, 2011, almost a month ahead of schedule.

**FAR RIGHT:** The new bridge is 196 feet long, 17 feet high and 44 feet wide.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**Justin Harvey, left, Shane Parris, and Bobbi Hodge of the Cherokee Construction office administered and inspected the work done by United Contractors during the three months it took to replace the damaged S.C. 150 bridge over I-85.**



## After record low in 2010, highway fatalities up slightly in 2011

By Pete Poore

**L**ast year was a record low year for highway fatalities in South Carolina with a total of 811. The loss of even one life is tragic, yet the figure for 2010 was the lowest death toll since 730 fatalities were recorded in 1982.

In more recent years, the decline be-

tween 2009 and 2010 was very sharp with 110 less deaths in 2010.

However, the death toll for 2011 is up 3% over figures from 2010. The fatality rate for the previous four years is still 15% lower than the numbers show so far in 2011.

In past years, the death rate on South Carolina's highways reflected that second-

ary roads in rural areas were the typical scene of a highway fatality. However, that picture is changing. The October report is consistent with earlier monthly reports in 2011 for highway fatalities.

- The October 2011 report shows that highway deaths on interstate highways have increased 34% from 2010.

- Deaths on primary roads have in-

creased 6% over last year.

- Fatalities on secondary roads have climbed by 8% over 2010.

One of the greatest factors contributing to the fatality totals is the sharp increase in pedestrian deaths in 2011. As of this October, the death rate for pedestrians is 30% higher than 2010.



# On the job with SCDOT's Bridge Inspectors

By Bob Kudelka

Making his way down the embankment's knee-high brush under the Rosewood Drive bridge at Gills Creek in Columbia, Curtis Alewine showed off one of a bridge inspector's more important tools: a long wooden walking stick.

The stick helps Alewine keep his balance when wading in creeks and streams underneath bridges, but on this day he was using it to beat the brush and send a message to any snakes that may be lurking nearby.

"We're coming, you get out of here," Alewine said, as he and his crew of Carter Brown and Jason Wolfman headed under the bridge for a routine inspection.

Snakes are just one obstacle SCDOT bridge inspectors have to think about every day on the job. The biggest thing in the back of their minds, however, is the importance of their jobs – making sure bridges are safe for all who cross.

"It's always in your mind," Alewine said, turning serious. "There's not a bridge that's going to fall down on my watch. If I remotely think there's a serious problem, I'm going to put a restriction on that bridge, or close it, if that is what it needs."

South Carolina has 8,361 state-owned bridges that must be inspected regularly. And because most counties and cities rely on SCDOT for their inspections, an additional 825 locally owned bridges are also inspected by SCDOT.

This means SCDOT's 30 bridge inspectors conduct about 6,000 inspections each year.

"They have to be not just thorough, but efficient as well," said State Bridge Maintenance Engineer Lee Floyd.

Fortunately, SCDOT has top-rate teams of inspectors and a training program that has been at the forefront nationwide, Floyd said.

"We've always had employees who are well-trained and highly motivated," Floyd said. "They know they're putting not just their lives at risk by inspecting bridges

under adverse conditions, but they also know that if they make the wrong call, it could affect someone else's life as well."

When there's a vacancy for an inspector, Floyd advises the Districts "don't just fill it with a warm body."

"If it's not what you want to do, I can promise you you're going to be miserable," Floyd said. "Some people do not like that kind of work. It can be very dangerous. Snakes, alligators, bees, yellow jackets... If you're uneasy with heights not only can you hurt yourself, you can hurt someone else, too."

The state's bridge inspection program is overseen by Floyd and state Bridge Inspection Engineer Mark Kwayisi, who runs the day to day program. All inspectors report to the DEAs in their respective districts.

Federal laws require team leaders to be certified, with at least five years of significant bridge experience plus completion of a two-week course. Floyd said SCDOT goes beyond those requirements.

"Since 1987, we kind of set the trend nationwide by requiring inspectors to come back every five years and get re-certified, no matter how long they've been certified or how many times they've been certified," Floyd said. "We feel like it keeps them sharp and they can still learn something new."

In September, a two-week course on bridge inspection was held in District 4. All SCDOT bridge inspectors attended the National Highway Institute course approved by the Federal Highway Administration. The course included classroom work, a field trip and exams.

"No matter if you've been on the job from a couple of months or 25 years, you go to that school," Floyd said.

Bridge inspectors are taught how to take core samples, spot evidence of sagging support, look for scour – the degradation of the channel bottom – and check the overall condition and health of a bridge.

Alewine and his team use ham-

mers to check pilings. "They give a unique sound when you hit a bad one," he said. "It's like hitting a hollow spot."

They measure the distance from the bridge deck to the top of the water below, something that will be logged for the life of the bridge. Dramatic changes can be signs of scour.

Smaller bridges can take an hour and a half to inspect, while others such as the Blossom Street Bridge, can take three days, Alewine said. On a high bridge like that one, inspectors use Snooper trucks that reach underneath the bridge deck.

The inspectors wade in water below bridges, but anything deeper requires specialized underwater bridge inspector contractors.

SCDOT's inspectors are also on call after hours. If a traffic crash results in damage to a bridge, authorities will usually call SCDOT to inspect the bridge before it can re-open.

"It's 365 days a year," Alewine said. "My phone is subject to ring at any time. The last time it was 2 a.m."

As the inspectors themselves will tell you, it's not a job for everyone.

"You've got to have a knack for it," Alewine said, "Especially when it's 100 degrees and you're in snake chaps or hip waders. You have snakes, gators, mud, water, and in winter you're busting ice in the creeks with every step."

But the number one danger is not snakes, inspectors said, it's the traffic.

"When we work on I-85, you work out there with no lane closures and have to be really careful," said Vince Wade, a District 3 bridge inspector and a 21-year SCDOT veteran. "Sometimes the shoulder is four feet wide, or it may be just a white line separating us from the traffic."

Wade and his co-workers in District 3 inspect 1,700 bridges. Like elsewhere in the state, there are many bridges made of timber piles that were built in the 1950s and 1960s that need close attention.

"We had to close one last week



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON /THE CONNECTOR

**ABOVE: District 1 Bridge Inspection Team. From left, Jason Wolfman, Carter Brown and Curtis Alewine inspect underneath the Rosewood Drive bridge over Gills Creek in Columbia.**

with steel piles where water was exposing a lot of metal loss," Wade said.

Wade said over the years he has learned to expect the unexpected when inspecting a bridge. He has seen everything from wild animals to people living underneath a bridge.

Wade and his partner, Brandon Avant, went about inspecting a bridge in Spartanburg County with little small talk.

"We take it seriously and do our job the best we can," Wade said. "We try to leave a bridge knowing that we made our best decision on the bridge."

Alewine and Wade both said despite the challenges, they love their jobs.

"These bridges have their own unique lives and they tell a story," Alewine said. "You can look and see what goes on with them. It's kind of like watching them grow old."



**State Bridge Maintenance Engineer Lee Floyd, right, and Assistant State Bridge Maintenance Engineer Mark Kwayisi manage SCDOT's Bridge Inspection units across the state. Here, they inspect water damage to the State House parking garage. They are serving on a special committee to find a contractor to repair the garage for the Budget and Control Board.**



**District 1 Bridge Inspector Wil Pointer loads the bridge inspection truck with equipment before heading out on an inspection.**



**District 3 Bridge Inspectors Brandon Avant, left, and Vince Wade inspect a bridge on Highway 201 in Spartanburg County near Woodruff. The bridge was built by the District 3 Bridge Maintenance unit.**

## SCDOT Bridge Inspectors

### DISTRICT 1

Curtis Alewine  
Wil Pointer  
William C. Brown  
Jason Wolfman

### DISTRICT 2

Randy Adcox  
Darrin Clem  
Joe Alewine  
Greg Roche

### DISTRICT 3

Russell Aikens  
Vince Wade  
Brandon Avant  
Erasmus Palacios Jr.  
John Sanders

### DISTRICT 4

Todd McNinch  
Lee Estes  
Ted Barnes  
John Pearson

### DISTRICT 5

Rodgers Gaskin  
Spencer Cox  
Kirk Daly  
Kenneth B. Scott  
Edward M. Elmore Jr.

### DISTRICT 6

Eric Jones  
Chuck Fralix  
Reginald Dozier  
Courtney Green

### DISTRICT 7

Gerald Bonnette  
Drew Vartenisian  
Roy Jeffcoat



# SASHTO 2011, 2012 update

*SCDOT promotes Charleston's 2012 conference during this summer's conference in Kentucky*

By Pete Poore

SCDOT is one of 13 members of the Southeastern Association of Highway Transportation Officials (SASHTO). The organization holds an annual conference, traditionally in the summer months, with the host state rotating among the members.

SCDOT's turn to be the host state comes up in 2012. Somewhere between 800 and 1,000 participants are expected to come to Charleston for the events scheduled for August 25 through 29.

Seven SCDOT staff members attended the 2011 conference in Louisville, KY, this summer. Each person has a key role in organizing the 2012 event. Their mission in Louisville was to seek ideas and promote next year's conference.

Director of Support Services Andy Leaphart said the Charleston destination for next year was well-received. "Those attending the conference in Louisville were excited about coming to Charleston

next year. The City of Charleston with its history and charm sells itself," said Leaphart.

Tina Kennedy, SCDOT's Special Events Coordinator among many other duties, said the theme for next year is "Bridging the Transportation Gaps." Kennedy said, "The idea is to bring a large number of state DOT officials together to share ideas for using resources more creatively and efficiently."

Leaphart said between 20-25 technical sessions are being planned to create many opportunities to share ideas. The 2012 conference will also include sessions related to intermodal and freight programs.

Kennedy noted that the conference and all of its events will be held downtown. Charleston Place will serve as the host hotel. The overflow hotels and the trade show will be held within a four block area. "The idea is to provide "walkability," said Kennedy.

Casual networking opportunities will be provided through a golf and a tennis



PHOTO COURTESY OF KENTUCKY DOT

During this year's SASHTO conference in Louisville, KY, Jennifer Gruber, right, promotes the 2012 SASHTO conference that SCDOT will host in Charleston. Gruber will serve as the registration chair for next year's conference.

tournament, in addition to all of the tourist-oriented historical sites, beaches, carriage rides and other attractions available for down time.

SCDOT has three major partners for SASHTO 2012 that are greatly assisting

SCDOT. The Charleston Visitor's Bureau is assisting with the selection of event locations. Clemson University's Transportation Technology Transfer Service (T3S) is coordinating the trade show and the City of Charleston is assisting with meeting space.

## BRIEFLY

### Deadline to upgrade signs eliminated

In September, USDOT threw out the 2015 deadline to replace all street name and road warning signs with easier-to-read and more reflective versions. Instead, USDOT will allow local governments to replace the signs as they wear out. The new specifications for larger and more reflective signs must be met. However USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood said the specific deadline was too burdensome and unnecessary.

### Supreme Court rules in favor of SCDOT

The SC Supreme Court ruled in August against a Bluffton car dealership that had sued SCDOT because of a median closure on U.S. 278 in Bluffton. Hilton Head Automotive filed suit in 2008 claiming closure put in place by SCDOT limited left turns into the dealership and reduced the property value. The plaintiff sought between \$3.2 and \$6 million in damages. SCDOT attorneys argued that limiting access without denying access is not taking or modifying an owner's property. A lower court agreed with SCDOT in 2010. The plaintiff appealed to the state's highest court, however the justices upheld the lower court's ruling in favor of SCDOT.

### Cable guardrail's 10-year history in SC

SCDOT implemented the installation of Cable Rail in late June of 2001. In 2011, SCDOT has a network of some 479 miles of cable barrier on Interstates and a few US highways. During the 10-year history of the cable, 20,569 vehicular hits have occurred, an average of 5.6 cable hits per calendar day. The record shows 34 fatal crash-

es have occurred involving the cable barriers. The average cost of each repair is just under \$840. A positive trend is the decline in the number of hits statewide during the last 18 months.

### Railroad crossing listings now on-line

SCDOT's website has begun listing railroad crossings statewide and those scheduled for upgrading as required by a bill that was signed into law in June 2011. The bill is commonly known as "John's Law," named after 16-year-old John Brabham III who died in Sumter County in 2009, after his car was struck by a train. The lists can be found on the SCDOT web site at <http://www.scdot.org/inside/rrcrossings.shtml>.

### Hurricane Irene brushes by SC's coast

South Carolina was spared by this storm that brushed by the coast in late August. Maintenance costs were minimal - \$60,785. However SCDOT Maintenance forces locked down moveable span bridges prior to the approach of Irene. After the storm cleared SC's coast, bridges were unlocked, and roads in Georgetown and Horry Counties were cleared of fallen trees, tree limbs and other debris including sand washed up from the beaches. Some traffic signals needed to be repaired or replaced.

### After August funding released

USDOT has released its "After August" redistribution of highway funds in early September. This is money that went unused by other state DOTs. SCDOT qualified to re-

ceive a \$27 million share of those dollars that will be used to assist with existing federally-funded projects in South Carolina. SCDOT was required to obligate those funds in September.

### SCDOT awarded FHWA grants

SCDOT received \$9.2 million in grants from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for 11 projects across South Carolina. A complete list of the projects can be found on the SCDOT web site at [http://www.scdot.org/ArtMan/publish/article\\_1252.shtml](http://www.scdot.org/ArtMan/publish/article_1252.shtml)

### Congress passes surface transportation bill extension

Congress agreed in September to extend the current Federal Highway Bill for six months at current funding levels. Federal highway funding was scheduled to expire on Sept. 30. This is the eighth extension of the current bill that was originally set to expire in 2009.

### SCDOT crews cleanup after storms

Winter, spring and summer storms have taken their toll on South Carolina's highways in many ways in 2011. In addition to the damage to the roadways, an exceptional number of trees were brought down that had to be cleared by SCDOT Maintenance forces all around the state. During the period from Jan. 1 to Sept. 8, SCDOT crews cleared 21,837 downed trees from the state's highways.



## TIGER ROYALTY



PHOTO BY TIMOTHY T. STODDARD/LAURENS CONSTRUCTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURENS COUNTY ADVERTISER

2011 Clemson Homecoming Queen Hannah Caviness poses by Howard's Rock at Death Valley Stadium. Caviness worked two summers as a summer intern at SCDOT's Laurens Construction Office. At left, she carries a slump cone used for testing concrete in downtown Clinton during a 2008 streetscape project.

## TURKISH VISITORS



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

A delegation from Turkey visited SCDOT's Richland Maintenance facility to learn more about how South Carolina builds and maintains its highway system. Richland RME Tony Magwood, center, shows the group some aluminum guard rail used on I-126. Shown from left are: Zulfikar Berk, Mustafa Gungor, Ahmet Baser, Richland Resident Maintenance Engineer Tony Magwood and Huseyin Cam.

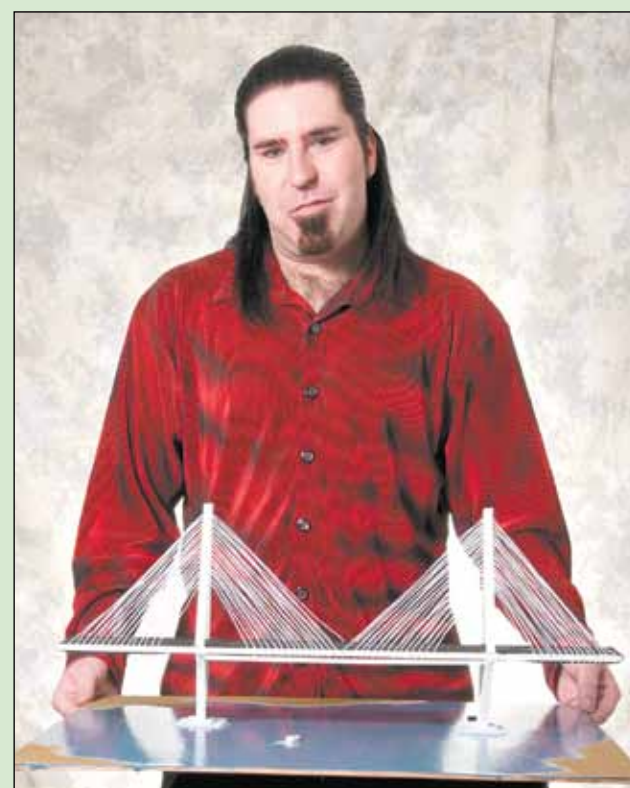
## TENNIS ANYONE?



PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED

Local Program Administrator Herb Cooper, left, and his sister, Margie Cooper, placed third, taking the bronze medal, in the mixed doubles tennis tournament at the National Senior Olympic Games in Houston this past June. Margie Cooper played on the professional women's tennis circuit for 3 years in the 1970s and is now a lawyer in Florida. Herb Cooper played tennis at Clemson University and has been an engineer at SCDOT since 2001.

## BRIDGE ARTIST



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Columbia artist Lyn Powell poses with his model of the Cooper River Bridge. The model was used as part of SCDOT's booth promoting next year's SASHTO conference in Charleston.





Electric vehicles, like the Chevy Volt below, can use an electric charging station at the new facility.

Dignitaries cut a 'green' ribbon Nov. 14 to officially open the new, environmentally friendly Clemson Area Transit facility. The new transit center has many energy-saving features and is the first of its kind in South Carolina. The facility also features a revolving collection of artwork from local artists.

## This is how CATBUS rolls

### *Clemson Area Transit cuts ribbon on green bus facility*

By Jim Frierson

Clemson Area Transit, known as CATBUS, celebrated the opening of its new state-of-the-art facility on Nov. 14, 2011, with a ribbon cutting ceremony in Clemson. Not only is this facility state-of-the-art

in terms of the latest technological features but it is the state's first environmentally sustainable intermodal bus facility and headquarters.

It is environmentally sustainable because of the many environmentally-friendly features it contains such as the 140 solar panels on the roof to capture

energy for heating, cooling and lighting the 7,000 square feet of office and working space. There is also special tinting on the office windows to reflect

**CATBUS**  
continues on next page



The facility is bike friendly with bike racks on buses and at the intermodal facility. Here, Ken Marsh tries out an electric bicycle displayed at the event. This model is a police special that can travel 30 miles on one charge.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

During the Nov. 14 celebration, several new technologies were featured. Above, visitors check out an articulated bus.



## CATBUS from page 20

heat to the outside in warmer months and to hold heat in during colder periods, thereby reducing energy consumption. Inside the offices and working spaces, sensors turn lights on and off as occupants enter and leave the rooms. They also adjust the amount of light provided to the rooms based on the amount of light provided by sunlight.

Office equipment inside the building is made from recycled materials, for example, a copier made from recycled printer cartridges and a conference table from a recycled solar panel.

Other environmental as well as technological features include an advanced bus washing facility that uses water heated by the same solar panels that heat water for use throughout the building. After the water is used for washing buses, it is captured in a tank and recycled by having the dirt and oil removed from it and then stored where it will be used again.

The new CATBUS facility has a parking lot which is constructed of permeable concrete which allows rainwater to re-enter the ground. The property surrounding the facility is landscaped using all native plants.

An additional feature on the property is an electric vehicle charging station located in the parking lot near the main entrance of the office building. Use of this station is free to all users who operate electric and electric-hybrid



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**CATBUS General Manager and CEO Al Babinicz discusses the environmental features of the new facility. Solar panels on top of the building not only heat water for use in the facility, they also heats the water used to wash the CATBUS fleet.**

vehicles.

The CATBUS facility also provides a kiosk for travel information and ticketing services for both Amtrak and Greyhound Bus making this an intermodal center for travelers wanting to make arrangements for bus and rail travel anywhere in the country.

Construction on the new CATBUS facility began on April 27, 2010, and was completed in early June 2011. CATBUS staff and riders have been enjoying the use of the bus facility since that time. The ribbon-cutting that took place on Nov. 14 saw many dignitaries and officials in attendance.



The facility is located at 200 West Lane in Clemson.



**Clemson Mayor Larry Abernathy thanks the people that helped make the new facility a reality.**

Among these were South Carolina Secretary of Transportation Robert St. Onge; Transportation Commissioners Eddie Adams and Sarah Nuckles; SCDOT Interim Deputy Secretary for Intermodal and Freight Programs Doug Frate; Clemson Mayor Larry Abernathy; CATBUS General Manager and CEO Al Babinicz; FTA Region IV Administrator Dr. Yvette Taylor; other representatives from local

area organizations; the media; the SCDOT's Office of Public Transit and many others.

All attendees were treated to a tour of the facility after the ribbon-cutting. Funding for this unique installation was made possible through several sources and particularly \$2.5 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation.



# Temporary Bridges

SCDOT installs temporary, reusable bridges in three locations

SCDOT crews will begin the installation of the first of three reusable temporary bridges the agency has recently purchased.

The purpose of the bridges is to serve as temporary structures that will allow traffic to continue flowing in a near-normal situation while an existing bridge is being replaced or repaired.

The bridges can be disassembled and reused for future projects.

The installation of the first bridge began on Dec. 3 on Teal's Mill Road in Chesterfield County.

A second bridge will be employed in the Society Hill area on the Darlington-Chesterfield County line. The third bridge is already designated for use on 55th Avenue in the Cherry Grove section of North Myrtle Beach.

The cost of each bridge is approximately \$360,000.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

**ABOVE:** Employees from Chester and Chesterfield Maintenance assemble the first of three temporary bridges that will be used by SCDOT.

**LEFT:** The bridge is assembled in sections on the yard at SCDOT's Chesterfield Construction Office. The bridge will be 120 feet long, 40 feet wide, with a usable roadway width of 33 feet.



Allen Dixson of Chesterfield Maintenance tightens a bolt on the temporary bridge that will be used at Teal's Mill.



The 14 sections will be transported to the Teal's Mill bridge location to be bolted together.



Steel decking will be installed after the bridge sections are installed at the Teal's Mill location.



Drew Sellers of Chesterfield Maintenance demonstrates how pins, shown below, are placed to hold together the sections of bridge.



The Teal's Mill temporary bridge construction crew is made up of, from left: Allen Dixson, Steve Gainey, Drew Sellers, Richard Hunter, Perry Crocker, Amanda Molina and Ike McBryer.



# Engineering News

## SCDOT deploys innovative bridge monitoring technology

### *Structural Health Monitoring: A cost saving experience*

By Lee Floyd  
State Bridge Maintenance  
Engineer

Like many states, South Carolina (SCDOT) has considered the use of structural health monitoring (SHM) technology to improve its bridge management and repair protocols. After some initial research and internal discussion, we determined that judicious use of SHM could enhance our ability to meet several key bridge management objectives, most importantly, safely extending the service life of selected critical bridges and therefore resulting in significant cost savings. This article explains how we saved approximately \$700,000 in agency cost for one bridge by using a technically appropriate SHM solution.

**U.S. 378 over The Great Pee Dee River:** This bridge was constructed in 1955 and crosses the Great Pee Dee River in the Pee Dee region of northeastern South Carolina. It is approximately 4,000 feet long and its original design loading was for an HS20 loading. An HS20 design loading is a 3-axle truck weighing 36 Tons GVW or a simulated truck and lane loading depending on the span lengths. However, an HS20 truck is not a legal load in South Carolina based on the combined weight and axles. The main spans of the bridge consist of a continuous steel two girder/floor beam/stringer system with cast-in-place concrete T-beams for the approach spans. The two girder/floor beam/stringer system also classifies the bridge as being "fracture critical." The bridge has an average daily traffic (ADT) of approximately 5,100 with 8 percent trucks and the ADT was projected to almost double over the next 20 years. Significant logging

operations and small manufacturing concerns in the local area contribute to the majority of the truck traffic. By some DOT standards, the ADT and truck use were not excessive, but the detour length, if load restricted, would have been approximately 50 miles, resulting in millions of dollars of additional user cost per year. As a State agency that supports economic development, SCDOT is sensitive to this added cost, particularly during our current economic environment, so overly severe load restrictions are a key concern.

The Great Pee Dee River Bridge has been inspected using both NBIS visual and tactile protocols since that FHWA program started in the early 1970's and the CoRe element level protocols since the early to mid 1990's. In the late 1990's, the bridge received a Sufficiency Rating below 50 and was classified as Structurally Deficient, which made it eligible for replacement using the FHWA Highway Bridge Program (HBP). However, project programming issues and funding limitations delayed the replacement project letting until November 2008. Construction on the new bridge began in January 2009 and was opened in March 2011.

Although weight restrictions were not placed on the existing bridge, the range of visual defects was cause for concern, especially if overloaded trucks used this bridge. SCDOT grew increasingly concerned during the construction planning period and developed a plan for a significant repair program to assure safe operations on the old bridge during construction, allowing legal load trucks to use the bridge without detouring.

**Inspection Findings:** Findings from NBIS and element level inspections over the years

showed a significant increase in the following conditions:

- Severe corrosion and section loss in the two main steel girders.
- Visible cracks in steel stringers.
- Increase in deflections, vibration and potential for fatigue initiation.

The 2007 inspection was of particular concern, especially considering that the old bridge needed to remain in service while the new one was constructed on a new alignment. From a historical perspective, SCDOT's other bridges of the same type had problems primarily in the floor beams and stringers due to water leakage at the expansion joints. In this case, the primary concerns were the two main steel girders, since SCDOT had never designed a repair for this type girder design. Several repair schemes were evaluated with an estimated cost averaging about \$825,000. While considering the repair alternatives, we determined that a structural health monitoring solution could provide SCDOT with an adequate safety margin for the old bridge while the new one was being constructed.

During 2008, we initiated discussions with LifeSpan Technologies of Atlanta, Georgia regarding use of their structural monitoring technology across South Carolina. After thorough investigation of alternative approaches and suppliers, we concluded that LifeSpan Technologies offered what we needed: a simple, rugged, reliable, cost-effective SHM solution that provided SCDOT with information that was easy to understand and essential to provide the enhanced safety we were seeking during construction of the new bridge. In addition, the monitoring system hardware was re-usable, which made it even more cost-effective.



PHOTO BY PETER REINHART/DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE OFFICE

**State Bridge Maintenance Engineer Lee Floyd takes a reading from the newly installed health sensor on the S.C. 641 bridge over Willow Swamp in Colleton County.**

SCDOT executed a contract with LifeSpan Technologies in January 2009 and the monitoring system was installed during the spring. Active monitoring was underway for nearly two years, until the new bridge opened in March 2011. The SHM system hardware was removed from the old bridge immediately after the new bridge was opened and will be re-installed on another bridge with serviceability concerns.

**An Added Benefit from Our SHM Solution:** We learned that a SHM solution can provide the bridge owner with significant information to enhance overall bridge management. For example, captured strain (both tensile and compressive) and temperature data was available 24/7 to our engineering staff over the Internet and we were also able to use hand held smart phones to observe captured data. After several months of data collection, we were able to filter out the observed strains driven by temperature changes,

allowing us to evaluate and quantify residual live load strains. This was particularly useful in the Fall of 2010, when we suspected overloaded truck use during the early morning hours. SCDOT alerted the State Transport Police, who began monitoring the situation. While the bridge was not load restricted, some detained trucks were overloaded, which created a significant safety hazard on the old bridge while the new one was under construction. When the safety situation was explained to the detained drivers, use of overloaded vehicles on the old bridge decreased. Some drivers even asked how we were able to detect the overloads.

**Financial Results from the Monitoring Solution:** SCDOT saved approximately \$700,000 by using a SHM solution versus

See **SHM**  
on page 13



# District 1 News

*Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Richland and Sumter counties*

**District Engineer:** Thad Brunson (803) 737-6660  
**FAX:** (803) 737-6401

## The right way is the safe way

*New Safety Representative's journey to SCDOT*

**K**en Collins is the new safety representative for District 1, transferring from York County. His journey to District 1 has been a long and interesting one.

Collins is originally from Washington State where he enjoyed youth motocross and snow skiing. After graduation, he joined the Air Force. While in the Air Force, he traveled around the nation and the world. He served as a weapons loader in Operations Desert Storm, Allied Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

In 1994, while stationed at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho, he began specializing in the safety and environmental fields. His program's goals focused on applying safe and responsible work places to a production atmosphere.

In 2007, after retiring from the Air Force, he moved to South Carolina – a place he had only visited once. He says he can't help that he should have been born on the lake

and he sure loves living in Wateree now.

He began his career at SCDOT shortly after moving to South Carolina as "The Safety Man" in York County. He quickly made friends with the men and women who perform road maintenance and saw the hazards they are exposed to every day. Their safety drives him to make jobs safer without making them harder.

In June, Collins brought this drive to District 1. He said, "my job is to make sure everyone goes home at the end of the day, while making sure projects get completed efficiently. I will challenge you to find a better way of doing business that is safer and more productive. My motto is: 'The right way is the safe way.'"

He married the love of his life, Cheri, on Sept. 3, 1988. They have two children, Johnathan who lives in Columbia and Britany who lives with her husband, Greg, and their son, Aaron, in Blythewood.

## Got news?

Contact Teresa Jackson at:  
 803-737-6715 or email her at  
[JacksonT@scdot.org](mailto:JacksonT@scdot.org)

**Teresa Jackson**



## Meet Leon Snell

**NAME:** Leon Snell

**TITLE:** Trades Specialist II

**SCDOT UNIT:** Lexington Maintenance, working out of the West Columbia Section Shed

**STARTED SCDOT:** January 1990

**L**eon Snell is a 21-year veteran at SCDOT. Originally from Holly Hill, he started working in that unit until transferring to Lexington Maintenance in 1992.

Snell is a trades specialist II working out of the West Columbia section shed.

Snell says he enjoys working at SCDOT with his coworkers. They are a good team that

works together to get the road maintenance work done for the citizens of Lexington County.

In his time away from work, Snell enjoys playing baseball and football as well as running track. He is a member of Rock Hill AME Church in Vance.

He and his wife, Charlene, have two children, Malcolm (21) and Cierria (12).



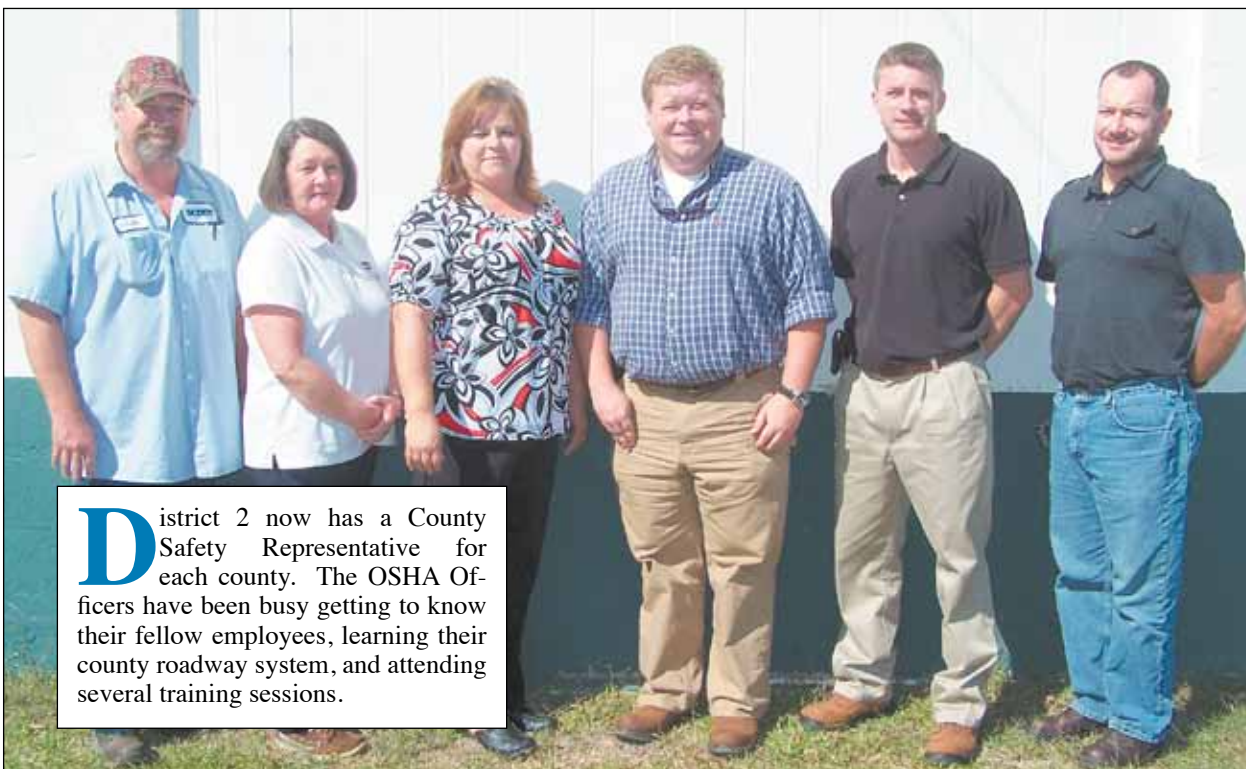


# District 2 News

*Abbeville, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties*

*Interim District Engineer: Kevin McLaughlin (864) 227-6971  
FAX (864) 227-6567*

## District 2 using safety representatives in each county



**D**istrict 2 now has a County Safety Representative for each county. The OSHA Officers have been busy getting to know their fellow employees, learning their county roadway system, and attending several training sessions.

The County OSHA Officers are, from left, Butch Bedenbaugh, Saluda and McCormick counties; Angie McCaslan, Greenwood County; Denise Brown, Anderson County; Seth Allen, Newberry County; Adam Hedden, Abbeville and Edgefield counties; and Jeff Davis, Laurens County.

## Full depth reclamation crews repair roads, save money



**D**istrict 2's new full depth reclamation crew started work on S-24-129 West Scotch Cross Road in Greenwood on Oct. 3. Reclamation is a fairly easy and inexpensive way to rebuild a roadway. Reclamation with a chip seal surface is much more effective and cost efficient for severely damaged roads than full depth patching during chip seal operations. The cost in-house is \$113,000 per centerline mile versus the contractor cost of \$208,000 per centerline mile.



The reclamation crew is made up of, back row, from left: Charles Cleveland, Ashley Miller, Larry Clark, Justin Dodgen, Chris Fellows, Justin White. Front row, from left: Ken Chambers, Randy Reece, Joe Padgett, Stanley Washington, Kevin Williams, Anthony Thomas.

## Got news?

Contact Sarah McKinney at 864-227-6222 or email her at McKinneySB@scdot.org.



Sarah McKinney

## CONGRATS!



Interim District 2 Engineering Administrator Kevin McLaughlin

District 2 extends their congratulations to DEA Christy Hall on her new appointment as SCDOT Deputy Secretary for Finance & Administration. Hall officially began leading the process of reorganizing the Finance & Administration Division on Nov. 7. District Traffic Engineer Kevin McLaughlin is serving as the Interim District Engineer Administrator for District 2.

## A letter we liked

**To: Abbeville Maintenance**

Thank you for the good job on cutting the grass on Old Calhoun Road in my area in Calhoun Falls.

**Billy J Cann**  
Calhoun Falls



# District 3 News

*Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties*

*District Engineer: Steve Gwinn (864) 241-1010  
FAX (864) 241-1115*

## Veterans: We salute you!

In District 3, many of our employees not only work full time jobs but also help protect our country by serving in the armed forces. Those who are not in the armed forces are often surrounded by others who are.

In this edition, we would like to take a moment to honor our current and past soldiers.

We salute!

• Chinmay and Abha Thakore (Greenville Construction A and B) - Harsh H Shah (Son); United States Marine Core, Reserve (Greenville Unit)

• Earline Muchow (Pickens Maintenance) - Bruce E. Gillespie, Sr. (Father); United States Air Force

4 years; United States

Air Force Reserve 24 years

• Carlos and Debbie Sams (Pickens Maintenance)

- Joseph Sams (Son); Active (until 6/6/11), United States Navy.

• Greg Kyle (Pickens Maintenance) United States Army National Guard

• Matthew Johnson (Pickens Maintenance) United States Army National Guard

• Johnny and Patricia Bradley (Pickens Maintenance) - Josh Shirley (Grandson); Active, United States Army

• Josh Readett (Pickens Maintenance) - Justin Readett (Brother); Active, United States Army

• Jody Levin (Greenville Construction B) - Joseph Estenfeld (Son); Active, United States Army (Deployed in 2009-2010 to Iraq for 16 mo - stationed in Hawaii)

• Paul Curtis Blackwood (Spartanburg Construction A) - Donovan Blackwood (Son); Active, United States Army Reserve (457th Chemical Battalion)

• Jason J. Gamble (Greenville Maintenance) - LCpl Deon D. Gamble (Nephew); Active, United States Marine Core (Recently Returned from Afghanistan)

• Joe Cannon (Greenville Maintenance) - Derrick Cannon (Son); Active, United States Marine Core

• Ron D. Horne (Spartanburg Construction A) - United States Marine Core

• Lawrence "Larry" Calvert (District Bridge Operations) - Retired, SC Army National Guard (served in Afghanistan from 11/2005 thru 2/2007 during Operation Enduring Freedom)

• Tameki Watts (District 3 Office) - SSGT Robert D. Watts Sr. (Grandfather); Retired, United States Air Force and Robert D. Algood (Father); Retired, United States Army (Vietnam) and Edward Allgood (Cousin); Retired, United States Army

• Tommy E. Wilbanks (Oconee Shop) - Retired (06-30-01), United States Navy (SCPO/E-8 26 years 6 month active duty, submarine force)

• Susan McGraw (Anderson Construction) - Honorable Discharge, United States Air Force and Thomas McGraw (Spouse) - United States Air Force, Retired

• Thomas Spivey (Pickens Construction) - Retired, United



**William Steading**

States Air Force

• William C. Steading (District 3 Office) - Honorable Discharge, United States Navy (Active duty on USS Yellowstone Flagship 1970-1974)

• John Sanders (Bridge Inspection) - Retired, United States Army (Vietnam)

• David L. Gilliam (Pickens Maintenance) United States Air Force

• James Dubois (Spartanburg Maintenance) South Carolina Army National Guard

• Dustin Nelson (Spartanburg Maintenance) Army National Guard - Trades Specialist II

• Rodney McNeace (Spartanburg Maintenance) Army National Guard

• Fredrick McCallum (Spartanburg Maintenance) United States Army

• Walter Gilbert (Spartanburg Maintenance) National Guard, Retired

• Michael Thompson (Greenville Maintenance) - Michael James Fontenot (Brother-In-Law); Active, United States Army (Served 4 tours overseas, currently stateside)

• Derrick Hamilton (District 3 Incident Responders) - United States Navy (Served during Global War on Terrorism)

• Ronald and Cindy Burgess (Pickens Maintenance) - Eric M. Radford (Brother-In-Law and

## Got news?

Please contact  
Tameki Watts  
at 864-241-1010  
or by emailing her at  
WattsTL@scdot.org

**Tameki Watts**



**Eric Radford**

Brother); Retired (after 32 years of service) United States Army, and Amber Nalley (Niece); United States Navy, Active.

• Patricia Bradley (Pickens Maintenance); United States Army Reserve (22 years) Active Duty (3 years following 9-11);



**Amber Nalley**

Joshua Shirley (Grandson), United States Army (currently stationed in Afghanistan)

*Although they may not have their names listed here, we are sure that there are many more within SCDOT. We salute you as well.*

## Meet Romi Martinez



**Romi Martinez**

**R**omi Martinez has been an employee with SCDOT for six years and works at the Spartanburg Maintenance Office.

She is married and has 2 daughters, Leslie (3) and Aaliyah (10), and one son, Samuel (3).

She and her family are active

members of Grace-Iglesia Baptist Church in Spartanburg.

Her hobbies include walking, cooking and spending time with family and friends.

Family is very important to Martinez and she hopes to return to Mexico soon to visit with her parents.



# District 4 News

*Cherokee, Chester, Chesterfield,  
Fairfield, Lancaster, Union and  
York counties*

*District Engineer: John McCarter  
(803) 377-4155  
FAX (803) 581-2088*

## SCDOT building named for Steve Williams



The Williams family poses in front of the renamed Lancaster SCDOT facility.

cussed. Williams, who was 87 when he died last year, had worked 40 years, serving as Lancaster County Resident Maintenance Engineer.

Stan Bland Jr., former District 4 Engineering Administrator, presided over the dedication, which included remarks from former coworkers, family members and elected officials. Lancaster Mayor Joe Shaw said Williams was always easy to work with and worked hard to see that as many roads as possible in the county received the attention they needed. Mayor Shaw remembered Williams as a "gentleman's gentleman."

Bland, who worked with Williams, said the building couldn't

have been named for a better person. "Steve is what you look for in a Resident Engineer," said Bland. "His career will always be remembered. It was a pleasure to work with him."

State Rep. Jimmy Neal, who represents Lancaster County, also spoke during the dedication. Neal presented the Williams family with a resolution from the House of Representatives recognizing Williams' accomplishments and commending SCDOT for naming the building after him.

Williams' three sons - Steve Jr., Ben and Carl - and other descendants and extended family were also there for the dedication, which included the unveiling of the black lettering that adorns the brick building.

### Got news?

Contact Edward Moore with your ideas at 803-377-4155 or by emailing him at MooreEO@scdot.org



Edward Moore

### Joe Patterson retires after 24 years of service



York Assistant Resident Maintenance Engineer Clint Beaver, right, poses with Joe Patterson and his wife, Lynn, after presenting him with his service award.

By John D. Welborn

Everyone at SCDOT York Maintenance would like to wish Joe Patterson and his old faithful Honda motorcycle the best retirements.

One month after Joe Patterson started working for SCDOT York Maintenance he decided that he would drive his Honda 750 to work and for the next 24 years he drove that same bike to work.

The first year that it snowed his co-workers wondered if Joe would drive

his motorcycle to work. "He was about 30 seconds late for work that morning," says Big Paul Elkins, "his beard was solid ice, and when his boss asked if he drove his bike that morning, Joe just said, 'I'm here ain't I.' Everyone just laughed."

Patterson thinks it was 2001 when he had 16 inches of snow. "I dropped that bike 3 times on the way to work that morning," he said.

RME Brad Trout told Joe's fellow employees, "If Joe can make it to work on a motorcycle in 16 inches of snow; I don't want to hear any excuses from anyone!"

**Williams' widow, Adele Hubbard Williams, thanked everyone for attending the dedication. "It's just a wonderful day for a wonderful man."**

The Lancaster County Maintenance Facility has been renamed the Steve Clyburn Williams Jr. Building in honor of the late resident maintenance engineer. The dedication was held in front of the facility, located at 1730 Pageland Highway in Lancaster.

There were many mentions of his dedication and hard work, as well as his pleasant personality. Familiarity with the community was also dis-

## Meet David Gamble

**Name:** David Gamble

**Work Unit:** York Maintenance

**Job:** Assistant Resident Maintenance Engineer

**Started Working at SCDOT:** February 2010

**Family:** A brand new godson, Justus

**Hobbies:** Movies, traveling, spending time with family and friends and EVERYTHING Clemson!

**Quote:** "True genius resides in simplicity" - Mozart





# District 5 News

*Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg counties*

*District Engineer: Dennis Townsend (843) 661-4710  
FAX (843) 661-4704*

## Got news?

Contact Michael Miller at  
843-661-4710 or by emailing  
him at MillerMW@scdot.org

**Michael  
Miller**



## Work Zone training done at Dillon Maintenance

Several Dillon Maintenance employees recently completed a Work Zone training class and were putting their knowledge to use while setting up a work zone on Interstate 95. The work zone had to be set up early in the morning to prevent traffic tie-ups.



Dillon Maintenance sets up the speed limit signs for the work zone.



SCDOT employees take down the arrow board as part of the work zone closure once the project has been completed.

## Meet Wilshawn Commander



Shawn Commander is a Trades Specialist at Darlington Maintenance and has been working with SCDOT since 2007. He is a backhoe operator and recently became certified as a CDL Third-party Tester. Commander has assisted

the county safety officer in training Darlington Maintenance employees on the correct pretrip inspection procedures and his exceptional efforts have been rewarded with an improvement in pretrip quality at Darlington Maintenance.

## Marion Construction works on Aynor overpass project



The Aynor Overpass project began in January of 2011, and is well under way. Its anticipated completion date is November 2012. The Bluewater Road bridge is 63 feet long. Here, a contractor is working on the barrier wall on the bridge.



Construction on the bridge over U.S. 501 is in process. Here, the cap construction on end bent #2 has started.



The cap on end bent #2 is now complete.



# District 6 News

*Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper counties*

*District Engineer: Robert Clark (843) 740-1665  
FAX (843) 740-1663*

## Jasper SCDOT mechanics run the rat race with style



Terry Smith, left, and Marvin Smith, right, both Mechanic IIIs at the Jasper Shop, show off their mechanical abilities and creativity through the making of rat rods. These award-winning trucks are nothing short of masterpieces. Not only do they look cool, but they run great. We can't wait to see what they come up with next!

## Johnnie Dodds FYI: *Quick facts on widening project*

An Intergovernmental agreement is in place between the SCDOT and Charleston County that gives the SCDOT operational authority during the design and construction of the project.

- The project is completely funded through Roadwise, Charleston County's ½ cent sales tax program.
- Nathan Umberger is the SCDOT Project Manager for this project.
- The Banks Construction/United Infrastructure Group Joint Venture was allotted 853 days to complete the project.
- The Engineer of Record for the Design Build Team is Coleman-Snow Consultants.

- HDR and Davis & Floyd are representing Charleston County for Design Review, Construction Engineering and Inspection.
- Ed Barbee from The Town of Mount Pleasant is heavily involved in the Public Relations aspect of the project.
- There are 2 bridges, 8 new mast arm traffic signals (that will be on an adaptive system), over 60,000 feet of storm drainage pipe and over 100,000 tons of asphalt going into this project.
- Widens U.S. 17 from 2 lanes to 3 lanes in each direction from the Ravenel Bridge to I-526 and improves the frontage roads.
- Modifies the open drainage system to a closed drainage system with water quality structures at the outfalls on U.S. 17 and Frontage Roads.
- A new interchange and bridge over Bowman Road. This also includes MSE walls.
- A new bridge over Shem Creek on Bowman Road. This will widen Bowman



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLESTON COUNTY

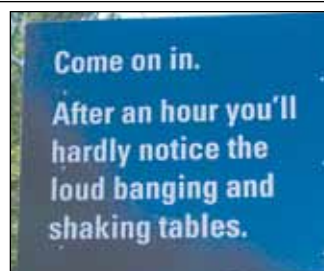
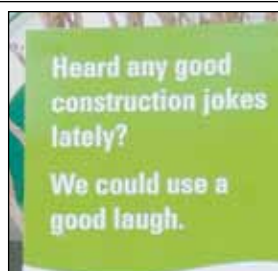
age system to a closed drainage system with water quality structures at the outfalls on U.S. 17 and Frontage Roads.

Road from 2 lanes over the bridge to 5 lanes.

- The frontage roads and intersections will have pedestrian and bicycle features.
- Landscaping throughout the project.
- The project should be completed by the spring of 2013.

## Mount Pleasant merchants joke about road construction

In an attempt to give motorists a good chuckle, the town of Mount Pleasant has erected witty signs throughout areas affected by the Johnnie Dodds widening project. The signs encourage motorists to look past the construction and shop in Mount Pleasant.



Got news?

Contact Angelia Savage at :  
843-740-1667 ext. 116 or by emailing her at [SavageAD@scdot.org](mailto:SavageAD@scdot.org)



Angelia Savage

## I-26 Aviation interchange opens



PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRY WORKMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Traffic is flowing much better on I-26 thanks to the opening of the new Aviation Avenue I-26 Interchange on and off ramps.



# District 7 News

*Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Clarendon, Hampton and Orangeburg counties*

*District Engineer: Jo Ann Woodrum (803) 531-6850  
FAX (803) 531-6854*

## Meet District 7's Third Party Testers

District 7 third party testers have undergone training with CDL compliance, a division of the SCDMV. They are certified to administer pre-trip inspection testing, the basic control skills

### Aiken Maintenance Third Party Testers

Employee Name: Michael Holston  
Title: Shop Supervisor  
Certified: Oct. 30, 2008  
Years of Service: 29

Employee Name: Marlene H Cain  
Title: County Safety Representative  
Certified: Oct. 1, 2008  
Years of Service: 28

Employee Name: John C Taylor  
Title: Foreman - Driveway Crew  
Certified: Oct. 3, 2011  
Years of Service: 4

### Allendale Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: Terrell Baxley  
Title: Shop Supervisor  
Certified: April 12, 2011  
Years of Service: 2

### Bamberg Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: Amy Hightower  
Title: Foreperson - Mowing Crew  
Certified: Aug. 19, 2011  
Years of Service: 11

test and the road test for all of SCDOT CDL drivers. They also conduct annual CDL pre-trip testing as required in the new CDL policy.

### Calhoun Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: Rick Carter  
Title: Shop Supervisor  
Certified: April 8, 2010  
Years of Service: 11

### Clarendon Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: James Bannister  
Title: Foreman - Mowing Crew  
Certified: Aug. 11, 2006  
Years of Service: 22

### Hampton Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: Janet R. Crosby  
Title: Trade Specialist. II  
- Mowing Crew  
Certified: April 29, 2010  
Years of Service: 4

### Orangeburg Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: Mark A. Felder  
Title: Mechanic III  
Certified: June 6, 2011  
Years of Service: 17

### Holly Hill Maintenance 3rd Party Tester

Employee Name: Harvey Potter  
Title: Trade Specialist III  
Certified: Sept. 14, 2011  
Years of Service: 2

## Got news?

Contact Deborah Berry at:  
803-531-6850 or  
by emailing her at  
BerryDS@scdot.org

Deborah  
Berry



Harvey Potter



Marlene Cain, left, and Michael Holston



Terrell Baxley



Amy Hightower



John Taylor



Rick Carter



James Bannister



Janet Crosby



Mark Felder



# VIEWPOINTS

By Robert J. St. Onge Jr.  
Secretary of Transportation

**G**reetings and best wishes for a blessed holiday season!

As we approach the end of calendar year 2011, I ask all of us to reflect on our many blessings and to look at the positive things going on in our lives and in SCDOT. In my first eight months I have seen far more upside than the downside that many would have us believe.

**Good news:** We got a wake-up call about paying our partners on time!! This has led to a total, on-going review of our procedures, our organizational design, our manning levels, and our key personnel. Our internal communications are not what they should be and we are working, not just to repair the damage, but to set a solid course for the future. We will be a better department for all of the “pain” we may perceive we are experiencing. Think RENEWAL of SCDOT!

**Good news:** We are performing very well in many critical areas. Critical projects, such as bridges, are a special focus of mine and I want to shine a light on our successes. The S.C. 150 Bridge over I-85 and the I-95 Bridge over Lake Marion completed ahead of schedule; our use of and investment in temporary bridges to better serve the driving public; our diligent efforts to achieve compliance with new and stricter federal bridge inspection standards; our investment in multiple design-build bridge projects are but a few of the initiatives about which you may not be aware.

**Good news:** SCDOT has been recognized this year by AASHTO and others for innovation. Congratulations to those who have helped us achieve this recognition, but we are not done! Numerous other innovative projects are being executed including adaptive signal control

*“I have seen far more upside than the downside that many would have us believe.”*

Robert J. St. Onge Jr.  
SC Secretary of Transportation

and the harvesting of “killer trees” off the Interstate medians are but two of the working projects that YOU have brought to life. Keep thinking and suggesting! We need your brain-power!

Looking ahead to 2012, I see a positive picture for SCDOT. We will learn from our shortcomings, however well intended, and get our financial house in order. We will adjust our organization, our procedures, and our personnel situation to regain our status as a high performing, customer-focused organization.

I thank all of our SCDOT employees for their dedication and hard work in 2011: our maintenance crews who work so hard to keep our highways repaired and safe; our transit teams who work to enhance our public transit capabilities; our engineering staff who apply their expertise daily to ensure proper design of our highways and compliance with all regulations in building our system; and for all those working behind the scenes in finance, procurement, human relations, legal, and communications who keep the SCDOT ship afloat and heading in the right direction.

**Our Goals for 2012:** Complete the SCDOT RENEWAL and work toward Zero Deaths on SC Highways!

Please enjoy your families over the holidays and get ready for a great 2012!

Robert J. St. Onge Jr.  
Secretary of Transportation

## CAUGHT DOING GOOD!



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Lynsee Gibson assists during the Nov. 29 Program and Resource Analysis Meeting. She developed a tool that helps cash flow analysis.

**L**ynsee Gibson has been an instrumental component of the Program and Resource Analysis Meeting (PRAM) and improvement of the agency’s ability to provide forecasted cash flow and balance information.

Recently, in conjunction with her participation in the PRAM meeting, she developed a tool that allows staff to evaluate multiple scenarios of approved projects and graphi-

cally represent each project in a cash flow analysis. These “what if” scenarios from the PRAM team have given senior management added ability to review and make decisions on agency operations, purchases and construction contracts. Gibson works in the Program Applications Office in the Engineering Division.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Robert J. St. Onge Jr.

## SCDOT Ensemble brings holiday cheer to Headquarters



The SCDOT Ensemble performed holiday carols at SCDOT headquarters on Dec. 6, 7 and 13.

From left: Brunelle Rawlinson, Nancy Redmond, Audrey Davis, Michelle Walker, Delores Gilmore and Sandra Castor.

From left: Veronica Merriman, Shirley Myers, Delicia Wingard, Susan Douglas, Maceo Morris, Tom Dodds, Michael Covington, Marvin Carnell, Chuck Blackwell and Robert Johnson.

Not pictured: Paula Hollis, Aliza Bolton, Terecia Wilson and Myron Singleton.





# THE CONNECTOR

VOLUME XXIV NO. III SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FALL 2011



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## Recycling program coming to SC Welcome Centers

Travelers stopping at South Carolina's nine Welcome Centers soon will have the opportunity to recycle aluminum cans, plastic bottles and newspapers thanks to a new program developed by a public-private partnership, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) announced Tuesday, Nov. 15.

This new program, "South Carolina Welcomes You to Recycle," began Nov. 15 at the York County Welcome Center on I-77 and will cover all nine of the state's Welcome Centers once fully implemented.

"Many of the visitors who stop at our Welcome Centers have beverage containers and newspapers they would like to recycle," said Lee Tsiantis, SCDOT's Maintenance Contracts Manager. "This program will provide travelers a convenient opportunity to recycle while on the go. This recycling effort also will reinforce litter prevention and help keep South Carolina's roads clean and beautiful for all of us and our visitors to enjoy."

The "South Carolina Welcomes You to Recycle" partnership includes SCDOT, Sonoco Recycling, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and Palmetto Pride.

Sonoco Recycling will provide the containers and signage for all of the Welcome Centers.

"This effort is part of our commitment to the recycling culture in South Carolina," said Jim Brown, vice president of Sonoco Recycling. "Recycling is not only good for the environment by conserving natural resources, but also is good for the economy by helping create jobs."

More than 2 million people visit South Carolina's Welcome Centers each year.

A news conference at the Welcome Center at York County launched the recycling program on



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR  
**Speakers at the Nov. 15 announcement included, from left: Arthur Ligon of York County, Sonoco Recycling Vice President Jim Brown and SCDOT Maintenance Contracts Manager Lee Tsiantis.**

Nov. 15.

"We are very appreciative for York County's essential commitment to pick up the recyclables for processing," Tsiantis said. "We are working on similar partnerships at all the Welcome Centers."



**SC Welcome Centers started a new recycling program developed by a public-private partnership between SCDOT and Sonoco Recycling. Sonoco Recycling will place containers and signage promoting the recycling of aluminum cans, plastic bottles and newspapers. They will be placed at nine welcome centers across South Carolina.**



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